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An Historical  
**ACCOUNT**  
OF THE  
*Manners and Behaviour*  
OF THE  
**CHRISTIANS:**  
And the Practices of  
**CHRISTIANITY**  
Throughout the  
SEVERAL AGES  
OF THE  
**C H U R C H.**

Written originally in *French* by Msr. Cl. Fleury,  
Præceptor to *Monseigneur de Vermandois*; and  
to the Dukes of *Burgundy* and *Anjou*.

L O N D O N,  
Printed for Thomas Leigh at the Peacock against  
St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-street. 1698.



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THE  
**PREFACE.**

**T**HE Learned Author of this Book gives several Instances of his Ingenuity and Candor. He recommends some Primitive Practices that justify our Reformation; Particularly the continual reading and studying of the Holy Scriptures. Speaking of the Ancient Christians, he says, that they studied the Word of God in private, Meditating upon it Day and Night. They read over in their Houses what they heard at the Church. Masters of Families took care to repeat those Expositions of Scripture they had Learnt from their Pastors. Many *Lay-Christians* could say the



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Holy Scripture by heart. They generally carried a Bible about with them; and many Saints have been found Buried with the Gospel lying on their Breasts.

*Women*, no less than Men, read the Holy Scripture; and in the Persecution regretted nothing so much as the loss of their Bibles.

*Parents* took such care to Instruct their Families, that in all Antiquity we find no *Catechism* for little Children, nor any publick provision made for the Instruction of those that were Baptized before they came to Years of Discretion. Every private House was then as a Church.

*He observes that St. John was the Chief in our Saviour's Affection*; Jesus Christ had a particular Kindness for his Disciples, and for his Apostles; and among them for St. Peter, and the two Sons of Zebedee, and for St. John above all the rest.

*He*

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*He does not found the Preference of the Blessed Virgin, upon Blood and natural Relation; but upon the Endowments and Qualifications of her Mind. Notwithstanding the most tender Affection which JESUS CHRIST had for his Mother, He seems sometimes to have expressed himself harshly towards her; and reproved the Woman that Blessed her barely upon the account of her being his Mother, and declared that he owned no other for his Mother and Kindred, but they that did the will of his Father. He knew what that great Person was able to bear, and was willing to let the World see, that Flesh and Blood had no share in his affections.*

*Mr. Fleury well observes, that the Church of Jerusalem which JESUS CHRIST, with his own Hands began to Build upon the Foundation*

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of

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of the Synagogue was *the Root and original of all other Churches.*

*He seems in nothing more to censure the Reformation, than in what he writes of the Celibacy of Priests; altho' Platina a Contemporary with Æneas Sylvi-*

*Platina in Vit. P. US tells us that, that Learned Pij. II.*

*Pope Pius II. used to say; "There was great reason for Prohibiting Priests to Marry, but greater for allowing it again. And Mr. Fleury writes thus of the Primitive Christians; they knew but two States, Marriage or Continence. They generally made choice of the Married State, having no good opinion of the Celibacy of the Heathen; tho' they preferred the State of Continence as knowing its Excellency, and often found a way of Reconciling both these States into One; for there were many Married Persons, who yet Lived in Continence. They considered Marriage as an Emblem of that Union, which*

*is*

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is between Christ and his Church. They knew that the Relation of Father and Mother, was an High and Honourable Character, as being the Images of God, in a more peculiar manner, and co-operating with him in the Production of Men. It is Certain by the Gospel, that St. Peter was a Married Man. Tradition tells us the same of St. Philip the Apostle; and that both of them had Children; and it is particularly observed that St. Philip gave his Daughters in Marriage. Among the Rules they give for the Education of Children this is one, that to secure their Virtue, they should timely dispose of them in Marriage: And they advised those that out of Charity Bred up Orphans, to match them as soon as they came to Age; and that to their own Children rather than to Strangers; so little did they regard Interest.

*What He says of their Communi-*

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*cating*

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cating in both Kinds; *publicly Reading the Holy Scripture always in the Vulgar Tongue: The Custom of Sitting in their Churches; the Length of their Sunday-Service, is also Remarkable.* When they reserved part of the Sacrament as a *Viaticum* for *Dying Persons, that which they carried Abroad, was only the Bread*; tho' in their publick Assemblies, all in general Communicated under both Kinds; excepting little Children, to whom they gave only the Wine.

All the Lessons of the Scripture were Read in the *Vulgar Tongue*; i. e. in the Language Spoken by the better sort of People in every Country.

During the time of the Lessons and Sermon, the Audience was regularly Seated, the Men on one side of the Church, and the Women on the other: When all the Seats were filled the younger sort of People continued Standing. In *Africa* *St. Augustin* takes

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takes notice that the People stood all Sermon-time; but he better approved the Custom of the *Transmarine Churches*, as he calls them, where they heard Sitting.

Their *Litrgy* must needs have been very long: Indeed Christians did not then think that they had any thing else to do on Sundays, but to serve God. *St. Gregory* to shew how much his Strength was decayed, says, that he was scarce able to keep himself standing for those Three Hours, while he performed the Office of the Church; and yet his Sermons that are left us, are very short

*What Mr. Fleury says of the Compassion, the Church had for Hereticks must not be omitted, because nothing seems more to have encreased the scandalous Divisions of Christendom, than severity.* The Church Interceded in behalf of her own Enemies. We have many Epistles of *St. Augustin* where

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where he Begs the favour of the Magistrate in the behalf of the *Donatists*, convicted of horrid violencies, and even Murders committed on the Catholics. He pleaded that it would be a dishonour to the Sufferings of the Murdered, to put to Death the Authors of them, and that if they could find no other penalties for them but Death, they would thereby bring themselves to that pass, that the Church who delighted not in the Blood of her Adversaries, would not dare to demand Justice against them. This was a general Rule, that the Church should never seek the Death of any Man. They were content that Christian Magistrates should Correct or over-aw Hereticks, by Banishment or Pecuniary penalties, but they would have their Lives Spared: And the whole Church declared against the proceeding of the Bishop *Ithacius* who Prosecuted the Arch-

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Arch Heretick *Priscilian* to Death. Yet the Bishops couldnot always obtain the Pardon they desired for these sort of Offenders, no more than they could for others. Princes, to preserve the publick Peace, Enacted the penalty of Death against Hereticks, and their Laws were sometimes put in Execution.

*If in these latter Ages the Vows of Celibacy, and Poverty have been inconvenient, and but ill kept ; this might have been prevented by the Omission of them ; for as this Author observes ; We see no Solemn Vows in these first times. St. Chrysostom speaks of a Monks returning to the World as of a thing altogether free.*

*Again He tells us that the Monks, in imitation of the Primitive Christians, spent much of their time in Reading the Holy Scriptures. The Rule of St. Benedict prescribes the same to his Monks ; and more particularly*

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ly that all the time of Lent, and on Sundays, they should apply themselves only to this Exercise.

*He judiciously remarks how* Forged Books *and* pretended Miracles *gained Credit*: For want of critical Learning, and the knowledg of Antiquity, they were ready to receive such Suppositious Writings as were Imposed upon the World, under the specious Names of Ecclesiastical Authors, and also became too Credulous in believing Miracles. So certain it was that the Apostles and their Disciples had wrought Miracles, and that many true one's were Daily performed at the Tombs of the Martyrs, that they were not now over-curious in examining so as to distinguish the true from the false. The most surprising Relations of this kind in History, were the best received. Ignorance in Philosophy, and the little knowledg they had of Nature,

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ture, made them take all strange Appearances for Prodigies and interpret them as the Supernatural signs of God's wrath. They believed there was something extraordinary in Astrology, and dreaded Ecclipses and Comets as dismal Presages.

*To give but one Example more*; Religion, says Mr. *Fleury*, can't subsist without Study and Preaching to preserve the Soundness of its Doctrine and the Purity of its morals. It must necessarily fall into Decay, unless the *Holy Scripture* be diligently Read, taught, and expounded to the People; unless the *Apostolical Traditions* be preserved in their Purity, and Purged from time to time of those *Spurious Additions*, which the Inventions of Men, without any just Authority have made to them.

*Would but the Church of Rome take away these and all other Additions, that are contrary to and Inconsistent with the*

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*the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Christ, in the first and purest Ages of Christianity, and forbid all Disputation &c. as Innocent XI. by his Decree of the 19. of Feb. 1678. entirely abolished the Office of the Immaculate Conception, &c. Approved by Paul V. They might happily put an end to the great Division that has so long made the Enemies of Christianity to rejoyce; or, be able to maintain the charge of Schism against those that should then refuse their Communion.*

*What Passages or Expressions occur in this Treatise, which may be judg'd contrary to and Inconsistent with the Doctrine, Worship and Government of the Church of England, as by Law Establish'd; the Author and Editor of this Book are not answerable for, nor pretend to justify, considering that 'tis only a Translation of an Historical Tract, written in French, and often Printed by a Learned Author of the Roman Com-*  
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*munion, whose Name is mention'd in the Title-Page of this Book.*

*What he hath said in favour of several of the Doctrines of the Reformation, and the admirable Moral Reflections, which frequently occur throughout his History, and especially the former part together with other pious Relations, of it, are enough to shew, that excellent use may be made of this Treatise, and hence to justify the Publication of it in our own Language. And the more exceptionable passages that are in it, I must Entreat the Reader to consider as the meer effects of our Author's dissent from the Communion wherein he lived, and to admire rather, that he has said so much on our side, than that he has said no more.*

ERRA-

## ERRATA

**P**Age 8. Lines 16. read to establish. p. 13. l. 13. r. in mind of p. 27. l. 22. dele and. p. 35. l. 22. r. Orchard. p. 37. *Ibid.* l. 22. r. disease. p. 41. l. 11. r. furnish. *Ibid.* 18. r. Christians. p. 42. l. 24. r. *Pædagogus*. p. 45. l. 8. r. Sanctify. p. 47. l. 29. r. giving. p. 54. l. 32. r. itself. p. 56. l. 27. r. used. p. 77. l. 18. for where r. were. *Ibid.* l. 24. r. Zealous. p. 86. l. 26. r. occasion. p. 87. l. 13. r. *Gnosticks*. p. 99. l. 15. r. *Tutelar*. p. 103. l. 18. r. *Equueus*. p. 104. l. 28. r. lewd way. p. 105. l. 5. for of r. off. *Ibid.* l. 6. r. Spit it. p. 106. l. 17. r. Martyrs. p. 107. l. 23. dele the. p. 110. l. 25. r. reduced. p. 119. l. 25. r. Slaves. *Ibid.* r. State. p. 124. l. 22. r. such cases. p. 129. l. 9. for Bells r. Belles. p. 136. l. 7. for thy r. they. *Ibid.* r. delivered. p. 148. l. 12. t. Wife. p. 149. l. 25. r. Fifty. p. 156. l. 1. r. to each other. p. 157. l. 2. r. Priests. p. 158. l. 17. for them r. him. p. 165. l. 20. for this r. his. p. 182. l. 24. t. *Martyrium*. p. 204. l. 30. dele or the least sign. p. 205. l. 15. t. hath receiv'd. p. 240. l. 22. r. *Sylvester*. p. 241. l. 5. r. ornamented. *Ibid.* l. 30. r. *Candlesticks*. p. 242. l. 15. dele with. p. 251. l. 8. r. Pestilence. p. 259. l. 15. r. soever. p. 266. l. 17. r. many. p. 272. l. 1. for for r. the. p. 289. l. 24. r. thereupon. p. 305. l. 30. r. Conversions. *Ibid.* l. 32. for was r. were. p. 306. l. 1. r. Religion. *Ibid.* l. 17. r. *Hungarian*. p. 307. l. 13. r. could. p. 310. l. 2. r. Canons. *Ibid.* l. 31. r. how miserably. p. 313. l. 30. r. *Barbarous*. p. 314. l. 2. r. do that. *Ibid.* l. 6. r. Modesty. p. 318. l. 10. r. Chaplains. p. 322. l. 6. r. our way of Living. p. 326. l. 20. r. Journeys. *Ibid.* l. 26. r. Travells. p. 327. l. 32. r. upon them. p. 328. l. 15. r. beare. p. 330. l. 28. r. assistance. p. 332. l. 31. r. multitude.



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# THE BEHAVIOUR AND MANNERS OF THE Christians.

## Part the First.

**I** Shall divide my Work into four Parts :  
The first will represent the Manners I.  
of the Christians of *Jerusalem*, to the The divi-  
Destruction of that City, under *Vespasian*. sion of the  
This first state of Christianity, though whole.  
but of a short continuance, was so su-  
pereminent in its Perfection, that it well  
deserves a separate Consideration.

The second will take in all the Time of  
the Persecution ; that is the entire space of  
three Centuries.

In the third I shall describe the State of  
the Church in its Liberty, which Com-  
menced in the fourth Age. And

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In



In the last consider the Changes it afterwards underwent; and endeavour to discover the Causes of them.

II. The first part, the Church of Jerusalem. The Christian Religion, as it was not the Invention of Man, but the Work of God; so like the Universe, it had its full Perfection in its first Birth, and was most Glorious in its earliest Productions. It is not to be imagined, saith *Tertullian*, that the Apostles were ignorant of any Truth, profitable to Salvation, or that the Invention of after Ages hath found out any new Rule of Living more perfect, or more Sublime than what Jesus Christ taught his Disciples. But this Heavenly Doctrine did not always produce the like effects, but had its different Operations according to the different Dispositions of those that received it, or the different measures of Grace, with which God was pleased to Accompany it. The true *Israelites*, who had by the Tradition of their Fathers, and the use of the Holy Scriptures, been bred up in the knowledge of the true God, and from their Infancy inured to the observation of his Laws; the Gospel found them well prepared for that higher Perfection it required, when that perfection should be discovered unto them, and they should be made to understand, what kind of Salvation that was, which their *Messiah* was to bring them, and what kind of Kingdom, his Kingdom was to be.

But

But as for the Gentiles, who had hitherto lived without God, and without Law, trained up (according to the custom of the then Deluded World) in the most horrid Superstitions; Worshiping (with as little understanding as the Beasts of their Sacrifice) dumb Idols, plunged in sensuality, and habituated to all sorts of Impieties and Impurities, it was far more difficult for them to Rise to the same Perfection. So that 'tis among the Christians of this first Church of Jerusalem, we must look for an Example of a Life, the most perfectly Christian, and consequently the most perfectly happy, that Mortality is capable of.

We must begin with the Life of Jesus Christ himself, who is both the Original, and the Model of all perfection. He hath given us an Example that as he hath done, so should we do. And this is one of the grand Advantages we receive by the Incarnation, that thereby the Word became sensible, and by conversing with Man, as Man rendered himself the Object, not only of our Admiration and Adoration, but of our Imitation also; having in his Life set us that perfect Exemplar, in conformity to which, we are to Regulate ours. I know very well, that a Life so Divine cannot be worthily described, but by those who have seen with their Eyes and heard with their Ears, and whose hands have handled the



## The Behaviour and Manners

*Word of Life, and who were themselves acted by his Spirit.* Yet may every Man according to the measure of his Capacity, employ his thoughts and meditations upon it, and point out some of the particulars which he Judges more proper for our Imitation; leaving it to others more advanced in the exercises of Devotion and the practice of Christian Vertues to make still farther Discoveries in so Inexhaustible a Subject.

In the Life of Jesus Christ we cannot go too far back. He was an Example from the Cradle, and in his first Years set us a Copy of the first Vertues we are capable of Learning, that is, the Vertues of Childhood. He shewed himself in that Age Docile, Tractable and Submissive towards his Parents, and of such a sweetness of Temper and Behaviour, that rendred him amiable in the sight of all that beheld him.

*Luk. 2. 40.* For thus saith the Scripture; As he Increased in Stature, so he increased in Wisdom, and in favour with God and Man. As for all the rest of his Youth till he came to be thirty Years of Age; we have no other Account of it, but that he abode in the little City of *Nazareth*, passing there for the Son of a Carpenter, and was a Carpenter himself. This Silence of History expresses better than any Words could have done, the State of Privacy in which

## of the Christians.

which as yet he lived. Jesus Christ himself (He who came to be the light of the World) passed the greatest part of his Days upon earth in obscurity. He spent thirty years in the condition of a private Life, and only three or four in Preaching, and the publick exercise of his Ministry, to shew that 'tis the duty of the generality of men to keep themselves within a private Station, and labour in silence, and that 'tis only for some few persons to put themselves upon publick Functions, and that only so far forth as they shall be by the Designation of God, or by Charity toward their Neighbour, obliged thereunto.

The Occupation which he chose to follow is also worthy our Reflexion. To live by the labour of ones Hands, is a state of Life more Poor, than to have Lands to Till or Cattle to Feed. Whether his Trade of a Carpenter was to build Houses, or (as ancient Tradition reports) to make Plows and other Instruments of Husbandry; 'tis certain 'twas a mean and laborious employment: but at the same time a very useful and necessary one to Society, and such without which there would scarce be any living in the World; and therefore a more laudable way of getting a lively-hood than any of those that Minister only to Pleasure and Vanity. Thus he passed his younger days in the Family

of his Father, and place of his Education, leading a life not slavish or reproachful, nor trifling and insignificant; but serious, employed, and laborious, submitting to the Penalty imposed upon the Posterity of *Adam*, of earning their Bread with the sweat of their Brows, and shewing himself an Example of those two Vir-

*Mat. 11. 27* tues he so much recommended to others, *Meekness* and *Humility*.

Before he ent'ed upon the execution of his Mission, he prepared himself for it by

*Luk. 3. 21.* Baptism, Prayer and Fasting; not that he had any need of these Preparatories, but that he might (as he himself expresses it)

*Mat. 3. 15.* fulfil all Righteousness, and give us an Example. His Fast of forty Days and forty Nights, and subsisting so long without Food, is ordinarily look'd upon as a Miracle, as well as the like in *Moses* and *Elias*. But I know not whether we do in this matter sufficiently understand the strength of Nature it self. St.

*Theodor. Hist. Relig. P.* *Simcon Stylites* did more than once pass an whole *Lent* together without Eating, having by degrees brought himself to so prodigious an Abstinence. And at this Day there are Idolaters in *India*, who can pass twenty days or more, without tasting a bit all that while.

During this Fast, and all his long abode in the hideous solitude of the Wilderness;  
in

in what can we imagine he employ'd his Time but in Prayer? But who dares pretend to describe the Praying of Jesus Christ? Let us humbly Meditate upon what the Scripture hath left to us concerning it; and more especially upon that Heavenly Prayer, recorded by *St. John: Joh. 17.* Nay, let not the Manner after which he prayed, nor the Circumstances, of it escape our Observation. He prayed in the darkness of the Night, and sometimes whole Nights together. He Prayed in Publick, and he Prayed in Private; in the Garden, in the Mountains, in the Wilderness, removed out of the noise of the World, where no mortal Eye could see him. He lift up his Eyes and his Hands to Heaven, he cast himself upon his bended Knees; He prostrated his Body on the Earth; testifying by all this his profound Veneration and Submission to his Heavenly Father.

He suffered himself to be tempted, to animate us after his Example, courageously to resist the evil one. He repelled every assault by Scripture instances, to teach us among other things, to be always Meditating upon these sacred Writings, to have recourse to them upon all occasions, and to regulate every Action according to their Directions.

After that he takes upon him his Character, and makes his Publick Appearance

in the World ; beginning from that time to lead a Life which is the Model, after which Priests, Bishops, and all publick Persons ought to form theirs. His principal employment was the Instruction of Mankind, and the Conversion of Sinners. He came (as he himself declares) to seek, and to save that which was lost. To that end, by the Miraculous Cure of Diseases, and his many other Works, he drew the Eyes of all the World upon him ; thus at the same time convincing their Judgments by the Proof of his Power, and gaining their Affections by instances of his Goodness. For Miracles as they were necessary to establish his Mission, so were they of no less Efficacy to recommend his Doctrine : And 'tis in this, that the holy Bishops of old, tho' without the gift of Miracles, knew how to imitate their Master ; they knew what weight their Works would add to their Doctrine ; and therefore by the largeness of their Alms, the Protection of the Oppressed, the Reconciliation of Differences, and other such like good Services they did to Mankind, endeavoured to recommend themselves to the World, and gain Respect and Love to their Persons ; though even the Works themselves of Jesus Christ ; as to the manner of them, are not altogether above our imitation, for they may serve to teach us the Vertues of Sim-

Luk. 19. 10.

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Simplicity, Humility, and Patience. He did his Miracles without Affectation, without any thing of Ostentation or Vain-Glory, and without so much as being entreated, unless sometimes when he found it necessary, either to exercise the Faith of those who wanted his help, or to discover it, and make it the more Exemplary to others. He generally concealed his glorious Performances, with as much care as others do their disgraces. He seems to attribute them rather to the Faith of the Patients, than to his own Power. And this is given as the reason, why he did so few of them at *Nazareth*, because of their unbelief, at which 'tis said, he himself marvelled. He ascribed all to the Glory of his Father, *I can of mine own self do nothing*, saith he, *my Father that dwelleth in me, it is he that doeth the works.*

Mar. 6. 5.

Joh. 5. 30.

Joh. 14. 10

He must needs have had a wonderful Patience to endure that incredible multitude ; and the greatest part of them Diseased, Poor and miserable Creatures, that continually crouded after him, and pressed with that violence to come within the reach of him, that they even threw themselves upon him, as appears when he healed the Woman who laboured under the Issue of Blood ; and when he bad his Disciples provide a small Ship to wait on him, to save himself from the Throng.

Mar. 5. 24.

Mar. 3. 9.

When

*Mar. 1. 33.* When he was in any House, all the City  
*and 3. 20.* crowded to the Doors, as it were besieging him, and not giving him time to eat; so that he could not so much as enter into the Cities but by stealth, and was fain to abide without in the desert places; and yet even there the People in vast multitudes flocked after him; as appears by the five thousand Men he fed in the Wilderness; so that he was forced to retire to the Mountains for Prayer, to spend whole Nights there, and sleep only at broken intervals, passing from place to place; as appears by his sound sleep in the Ship, when in the midst of a tempest at Sea.

*Mat. 8. 24.* His Life was far more painful now, than it was when he lived by the Labours of his Hands; for now it appears he had none of his former leisure, by his permitting some Women to follow after him to supply him with Necessaries, and by his keeping some money by him, of which  
*Luke 8. 2.* *Judas* had the charge; which shews how little he valued his Money by the choice he made of its Keeper. He is observed to have given Alms; and yet at the same time he wanted himself; so that he was forced upon working a Miracle, to pay for himself and St. Peter, the Tribute of the first born, which was but half a Shekel, that is of our Coin about fifteen Pence.

And

And indeed, he always lived in great Poverty. He saith himself, That he had not where to lay his Head. He had no habitation of his own, nor so much as a place to lodge in but upon courtesy. At his Death we do not find that he had any thing to leave behind him but only his Garments, He saith, that he *came not to be Ministred unto, but to Minister.* He Journied from place to place on Foot; and when he made his entrance into *Jerusalem* riding upon an Ass; it is plain that was an extraordinary Action. He travelled in the heat of the Day. When he met the Woman of *Samaria*, tis said, that was about the sixth Hour, that is, about Noon, and that he rested himself by the Well, being wearied with his Journey: For though he was the Lord of Nature; yet we do not find that ever he wrought a Miracle for his own private Benefit, or to save himself any Labour. 'Tis once said, that the Angels came and Ministred to him, to shew the right he had to command them, had he been pleased to have made use of it.

In this same instance of his meeting with the Woman of *Samaria*, we see his wonderful Modesty, for 'tis said, That *his Disciples marvelled that he talked with a Woman.* And his very Enemies themselves had never the Face to invent any Calumny against him that could call his

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Chastity into Question. Nor was this a forced Modesty? There was nothing restrained nor Affected in him, who was the declared enemy of Hypocrisy, and who was the very Truth it self. His Conversation was simple, easy, Natural; yet lively and Affecting. He observed the Countenances of People, as when 'tis said that he beheld the Rich young Man, and loved him, Cherishing with a Compassionate look the very first beginnings of goodness in him, how weak and Imperfect so ever they were. He is often observed to have Stretched forth his Hands, and used other such like expressive Gestures. Sometimes by his Looks, and by his Words, He discovered the Sentiments of Admiration, Indignation, Anger, and of that uneasiness which the unbelief of Men put him to. At other times again, he Expressed the softest Affections of Tenderness and Indulgence; as when he caused the little Children to be brought unto him; laid his Hands upon them, Embraced them in his Arms, and Recommended to his Disciples the Imitation of their Innocency and Humility.

Mar. 9.46.  
and 10.14.

As to his outward Appearance, there was nothing singular or Extraordinary in it. He conformed himself to the same way of Living with the other Jews, appeared as a private Person, and had no Ex-

External Marks to Distinguish him from the Common People; one of whom he makes himself, by the name of the Son of Man; for that's the meaning of that Appellation. He led a Life full of Hardship and very Laborious, but without any singular Austerity. He Fed as others did, he abstained not from Wine, nor made any Scruple of being seen at great Entertainments; as at the Marriage in *Cana*, and at St. *Matthew's* Feast. *Luk. 5.29.* And yet he so little regarded Eating, that his Disciples once putting him in mind of taking some Food; when he had manifestly occasion enough for it, his answer was, *I have other Meat to Eat that ye know not of: My Meat is to do the will of my Father.* *Joh. 4.32. 34.*

Yet notwithstanding this mean and simple outward Appearance, he maintained a Marvellous Dignity, and kept himself far above Contempt. His Deportment was always serious, Grave and Composed. Upon two Several occasions it is taken Notice of him that he Wept; but not at all that he Laughed; nay or ever so much as Smiled, at least, as St. *Chrysostom* observes. He never asked any Man a Farthen, chosing rather to Work a Miracle than be beholden to any Body for a piece of Mony, to pay his Tribute with. But when he sent his Disciples to seek an

In *Matt.*  
*Hom. 6.*  
*Mar.*

As

As to make his Entrance into *Jerusalem*, and to take up for him an upper Room where he might keep the Passover; he shews by his manner of Speaking that he well knew no Man could have denied him any thing he should have asked. He proved his own saying by his Actions. *Mat. 23. 12.* *That it is more blessed to Give than to Receive*, since continually dispensing so many benefits to others he received so little from them. All the World sought to him and ran after him, and he sought to no Man; but going from City to City, Exhorted all Men every where to Repentance. He was free of Access to all Persons that were any way Diseased, and to all Sinners whom he found disposed for Conversion. To these last sort he shewed himself so easy and Familiar as even to Eat with them, and Lodge in their Houses. So that upon this occasion he suffered a certain Woman to kiss his Feet and Anoint them with Ointment; a sort of Indulgence, which might otherwise have seemed very opposite to that Poverty and Mortification he always Professed.

As he came into the World for the Instruction of all Mankind, he was continually upon his Work of Teaching both in Publick and Private. On the Sabbath Days, he used (according to the custom of the Jewish Doctors) to Expound the Scriptures

tures in their Synagogues; and thence they gave him the Title of Master or Rabbi. But he had a peculiar Air of Authority which sufficiently distinguished him from their Doctors. *Mat. 7. 29.* *He taught them as one having Authority*, saith the Evangelist, and *they wondered at the Gracious Words which proceeded out of his Mouth.* *Luk. 4. 22.*

His discourse was plain and clear, without any other Ornament than those lively and natural Figures, which are never wanting to a man fully perswaded and affected within himself, and which are therefore the most powerful to perswade and affect others. He spake much in a little, and sometimes answered Questions put to him, more by his Actions than by his Words, as when he saith to the Disciples of St. John the Baptist, *Go and shew John again those things which you do hear and see.* *Mat. 11. 4.* He lays down great Principles without shewing himself much concerned to demonstrate them, or to draw any Consequences from them. These Principles carry in themselves such a light of Truth, that if any Man withstand them, 'tis because he is wilfully Blind. And 'twas to punish this Depravity of their Hearts, that sometimes he spake to them in Parables and dark sayings. If at any time he made use of Proofs and Arguments, they were generally simple and natural, taken



taken from sensible Objects and Familiar Comparisons. His Miracles and his Virtues were of all others the most Powerful Proofs, and which he most insisted on, as being adapted to all sorts of Capacities, and therefore far more Convincing than all the Syllogisms of Philosophers. The learned, as *Nicodemus*, and the unlearned as the *Man* that was *born blind*, were equally affected with this way of Proof. To this he often joins the Testimonies of the Law and the Prophets, demonstrating that his Doctrine proceeded from the same Wisdom, and his Miracles from the same Power, and that the Old and New-Testament are both founded upon the same Divine Authority. 'Tis to this purpose, *Joh. 2. 3.* he so often makes use of the writings of *Joh. 9. 31.* the Old-Testament, either by express Quotations of the very Letter of it, or by manifest Allusions to it.

'Twas in this Spirit of Submission to Divine Authority, that he Nurtured up his Disciples; a far different method from what the Philosophers took with theirs; who under the pretence of seeking after the Truth, encouraged nothing more in their Pupils than a Spirit of Disputation and Contention. But Jesus Christ came not to seek the Truth, but to discover it, in such measure as he (who had the full possession of all Truth, or rather who was him-

himself the very Truth it self) should think fit: To the intent that they might the more profit, both by his discourses and by his Example; he seldom suffered them to be long out of his Sight, living in common with them, and making of all but one Family. They accompanied him whether soever he went, they eat and lodged together with him; so that they had the opportunity of being continually taught by him and learning every Moment. He inured them to the imitation of his Poverty, sending them abroad with out furnishing them either with money or any other sorts of Provisions; nay, and when he kept them with him, hunger sometimes forced them to take up with what they could meet with in the Fields; as when they plucked the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath-Day. *Tertul. de præscr. C. 22.*

He took great care to Instruct them; what they understood not of his Publick Discourses he explained to them in Private, using them as his Friends and Companions, and making known to them whatsoever he had learned of the Father; that is, so far as they were Able to bear it. And yet he did not fondly humour them in their vain Curiosity: On the contrary, we sometimes find him expressly Reprimanding them for their bold Enquiries, both before and after his Resurrection; *Mat. 13. 11. 15. 16.* *Joh. 15. 15.*

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*Tertul. de  
 præs. C.  
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*Mat. 13.  
 11. 15. 16.*

*Joh. 15. 15.*



Mat. 24. 36. as when they Questioned him concerning the End of the World, and when St. Peter would have known what was to become of St. John. At other times, he contented himself with passing by their Questions and giving no answer to them; as Jo. 14. 22. when St. Jude asked him *why he would not Manifest himself to the World*. He patiently bore with the slowness of their Apprehension, their Ignorance, their Vanity and Emulation, with all their other Weaknesses, and never ceased Labouring to correct them.

By his Disciples, I here understand those Twelve he had chosen to be always with him. But the Scripture gives the name of Disciples also to all those that had Embraced his Doctrine and received his Baptism, of whom there were a great Number, since there were an hundred and twenty of them met together in the same Room with the Apostles at the Election of St. Matthias, and there were more than five hundred of them together who all at the same time saw Jesus Christ after his Resurrection. This Church therefore consisted of two Parts; The common sort of Believers who are simply called Disciples, or the Brethren; and of those whom Jesus Christ had chosen out for the Publick Ministry, as the twelve Apostles, and the seventy two Disciples, whom

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he sent before him *by two and two together* Luk. 10. 1. *into every Place where he himself was to follow*. By these Distinctions we have set before us the several Degrees of Charity worth our Observation: Jesus Christ hath taught us, that we are to look upon every Man as our Neighbour, whom we ought to Love as our selves; as indeed he himself laid down his Life for all Men: Yet he had a more particular Kindness for his Disciples, and amongst them for his Apostles, and amongst them for St. Peter and the two Brothers the Sons of Zebedee; and for St. John above all the Rest. I shall nor here enquire into the Reasons of this Distinction, or why St. Peter and St. John should have received such especial Marks of his Favour? I shall onely observe, that he hath by this his Example, Authorised and Sanctified the Relations of Friendship, and those closer Bands of Amity which natural Affection or special Inclination may form between particular Persons without any Prejudice to a General Charity. He had other Friends besides his Apostles. He loved Lazarus Jo. 11. 5. and his two Sisters, he himself calls him 11. 35. his Friend; he expressed a very sensible Grief at his Death, and Wept as he was going to raise him out of the Grave.

Who can doubt but that he had a most tender Affection for his Holy Mo-

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ther, especially if we consider the care he took of her when he was Dying? And yet he seems some times to have expressed himself somewhat Harshly towards her: As when she found him *Disputing* *Luk. 2. 49.* *in the midst of the Doctors*, and when at the Marriage-Feast she told him that their Wine failed them. He reprov'd the Woman that Blessed her barely upon the account of her being his Mother, and declared, that he knew no other for his Mother or Kindred but they that did the will of his Father. He well knew, what that strong Soul was able to bear, and was willing to let the World see that Flesh and Blood had no share in his Affections. His Charity extended to all the World. *Mat. 11. 28.* *Come unto me, saith he, all ye that Labour and are heavy Laden and I will give you Rest.* It is said, that seeing the Multitude that followed him, he was moved with Compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as Sheep without a Shepherd. *Mat. 9. 36.* 'Twas this his Compassion that forced him at two Several times to multiply the Loaves of Bread; 'twas this his Compassion that forced him to raise from the Dead the Son of the Widow of *Naim*. He was a true Lover of his Country, and deeply concerned for the Welfare of the People of *Israel*, and City of *Jerusalem*. In the midst of his Triumph

umph he took up a sad Lamentation over her, as foreseeing the direful Calamities she was by her own Guilt drawing upon her self. He taught Men their Duty of Obedience to their Prince, Reverence to the Priests and Doctors of the Law how corrupt soever they might be; and he himself paid an Exact Observance to the Laws and Ceremonies of the *Jewish* Religion, though at the same time he was come to put an end to those Ceremonies, being Master both of the Sabbath and of all the Laws. Yet would he never take upon him to exercise any Authority as to Civil affairs, no not so much as to Arbitrate a Difference between two Brothers. *Luk. 12. 14.* Being Interrogated by Authority, he severally answered his Judges according to what Properly fell under their Cognisance. To the High Priest, concerning his professing himself Christ and the Son of God; and to *Pilate*, concerning the Title of a King. He declared that his Kingdom was not of this World, and consequently that his Doctrine threatened no danger to the Publick, but as to Civil Government left all things as it found them. It would be too Presumptuous an Undertaking to pretend to display all his Vertues and Excellencies. 'Tis a subject in which thought could never come to an end, and those Pious Souls who

who apply themselves to a close and intent Meditation upon the Gospel, do still discover fresh Wonders in it. Let me just add a Word or two concerning his Passion, where as the example was singularly Great and Extraordinary, so are we nearly concerned in the Vertues it teaches; the Vertues of knowing how to bear Sufferings; a Tryal we can scarce live in the World and Escape.

The Sorrowful Estate into which Jesus Christ was reduced in the Garden of *Olives*, Sufficiently proves that he was Subject to the like Natural Passions of Fear and Grief with other Men, and that therefore 'twas not Insensibility but Resolution that carryed him through his Sufferings. He bore them all with an Invincible Constancy, without making any Defence, without Resisting, without Refusing to submit to whatsoever his Tormenters laid upon him: Immovable as a Rock he received all their Scourgings and Outrages. His Silence was such as made his Persecutors themselves admire. He who with a Word Speaking could have confounded his Accusers, the false Witnesses, and his Judges themselves; yet he opened not his Mouth, and that because he knew they were not disposed to hear any thing in his Justification. Upon the Cross it self; and under the last

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Agonies of his Suffering, he still Maintains the same firmness of mind, the same Freedome, nay the same Tranquillity of Spirit. He Prayed for them that put him to Death; he recompenced the Faith of the good Thief; he took care to provide for his disconsolate Mother; he fully accomplished the Prophecies; he recommended his Spirit to God.

The Apostles after their having receiv'd the Holy Ghost appeared in the World as so many Living Images of Jesus Christ, and as it were Transcripts of that Original, according to which the Faithful were to form themselves. Nor do they stick to declare as much. *Be ye followers of me saith St. Paul even as I am of Christ,* <sup>1 Cor. 11. 1.</sup> and again. *Be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as ye have us for* <sup>Phil. 3. 17</sup> *an ensample.*

So that though they diligently applied themselves to Teaching, they did it more by their Examples than by their Discourses. Among the Faithful the Apostles chose out some select Persons whom they made their Disciples, and upon whom they bestowed more full and distinct Instructions, using them as they themselves had been used by Jesus Christ. These their Disciples in particular, always attended their Persons, living in the same House with them, Eating at the same Table,

and Lodging in the same Room: At least tis after this manner, that the Author of the Recognitions describes St. Peter to have Lived with his Disciples. Nor is this Tradition (as will afterwards appear) lightly to be rejected. These Disciples accompanied the Apostles in their Travels, and as new Churches were established had the Government of them committed into their Hands

Thus we find St. Peter attended by St. Mark whom he calls his Son; by St. Clement, so famous throughout all the Churches; St. Evodius who succeeded him at Antioch; St. Linus and St. Cletus who succeeded him at Rome. With St. Paul we find St. Luke, St. Titus, St. Timothy, and the same St. Clement. With the Apostle St. John, we find St. Polycarp and St. Papias. These Saints took care to preserve the Doctrine of the Apostles, rather in their Memory than in writing, and to teach it more by their Practices than by their Discourses. And thus imitating their Masters, they made themselves as St. Paul expresses it, the examples of Believers, in Word, in Works, in Faith, in Charity, in Purity, in Gravity, and in all manner of holy Conversation. Besides these Disciples, after the same manner took to themselves other Disciples, whom they formed and Disciplined as they themselves had been

1 Pet. 5.  
13.

Euseb. 3.  
hist. c. 38.

1 Tim. 4.  
12.  
Tit. 2. 7.

been by the Apostles; Qualifying and Capacitating them also to do the like to others. This is the charge given by St. Paul to Timothy. *The things which thou hast heard of me, among many Witnesses; the same commit thou to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others also.* <sup>2 Tim. 2. 2</sup>

But to return to those that were taught and governed immediately by the Apostles themselves; and particularly, to this Church of Jerusalem; which Jesus Christ had begun with his own Hands, to build upon the Foundation of the Synagogue, and which was not only the Example but also the root and Original of all others: Let us see therefore after what manner the Scripture describes unto us these first Believers.

*They continued stedfastly in the Apostles Doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers. All that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their Possessions and Goods, and parted them to all Men, as every Man had need. They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and breaking bread from House to House, they did eat their Meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people; and again, The multitude of them that believed, were of one Heart, and of one Soul: Neither said any of them, that ought of the things he possessed* <sup>Act. 2. 42.  
Ibid. 43.  
Act. 4. 35.</sup>

Ibid. 34.  
Ec.

Acts 5. 12.

sed was his own, but they had all things in common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as had Possessions of Lands or Houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles Feet: and distribution was made unto every Man according as he need. And by the Hands of the Apostles were many Signs and Wonders wrought amongst the People: and they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. And of the rest durst no Man join himself to them: but the People magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of Men and Women.

The sum of which description may be reduced to these following Heads; amongst themselves, Preaching, Praying, Communion, mutual Affection, Communication of Goods, inward Satisfaction; and from without, the Respect, Esteem and Favour of the People. This first Church was composed of Persons of every Sex and Condition, and grew quickly very numerous: For there were three thousand Converted at the first preaching of St. Peter, and five thousand at a second. It is said more than once, that the number of Believers encreased every Day; and one passage there is, that seems to imply, as if there were many *ten thousands* of them.

Acts 21. 20.  
many thousand, 'tis in the Original Myriads.

They were the greatest part of them married

ried Persons. (absolute Continence being a thing rarely practiced in those Days) They lived separately; for 'tis said, they went from house to house breaking bread, that is, Consecrating and distributing the Holy Eucharist; yet they lived in common, reducing all they had into ready money which at first the Apostles, and afterwards the seven Deacons distributed to every one according to his need; and with such fidelity and discretion did they manage this affair, that there were no Poor amongst them.

Here therefore was to be seen a visible and real Example of that Communication of Goods, and living in common, which the old Legislators and Philosophers looked upon as the most proper means of making mankind happy; but without ever being able to bring it into practice: 'Twas to compass this, and that *Minos* in the first times of Greece would have established in Creet his *Tabula Communes*, and that *Lycurgus* took such Precautions to banish from among the *Lacedæmonians* all excess, and the use of Riches. But *Plato* pushes his Idea of Community a little too far, when to leave nothing uncommon, he was for taking away the distinction of Families. They well saw, that to make a perfect Society, there must be left no *Meum* and *Tuum*, no room for private and se-

Arist. polit.  
lib. 2.

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parate Interests. But they could onely make use of Penalties to constrain, or Arguments to perswade Men to accept of their Regulations; and therefore all their labour was in vain. 'Twas only the Grace of Jesus Christ that could change the Hearts of Men, and cure the corruption of their Natures.

Thus this Communication of Goods among these Christians of *Jerusalem*, was the pure effect of that singular Charity with which the Gospel had inspired them, which made them all Brethren to each other, and as it were of one and the same Family; where out of one and the same Estate, the Father provides for all his Children, and loving them all equally, suffers none of them to want. They had always before their Eyes the Commandment of Jesus Christ, of loving one another, so often repeated by him, and particularly the night before he suffered, making this the distinguishing Character by which all men were to know that they were his Disciples. But that which obliged them to sell their Possessions, and reduce all into ready Mony, was our Saviour's Command of forsaking all that they had; which they practised not only in the inward disposition of the Heart, in which terminates the obligation of this Precept, but in reality of Fact, according to that Counsel of our Saviour

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*Job. 13 35.*

*If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and come and follow me.* For a man more effectually secures himself from being incumbred with the things of this Life, if he really parts with them, than he can be while he keeps them in his Hands. Besides they considered that our Saviour had foretold the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and that he had limited the time of it to be before that Generation should pass away; which made them willingly clear themselves of all the concerns they had, either in that accursed City it self, or in the Country belonging to it, devoted to Destruction.

So that the Believers living in common, was a practice peculiar to the first Church of *Jerusalem*, and suitable to the condition of those times and Persons. For it would have been an hard matter, at least Humanly speaking, for so numerous a Church to have long Subsisted without the support of some fixed Fund and Revenues that were certain; and by the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul we see, that during the short time of its continuance, it stood in need of Relief from other Churches, and that out of all the Provinces there were remitted considerable sums for the use of the Saints at *Jerusalem*. And yet St. Chrysostom so long time after sticks not to propose this

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*Ma. 12. 21.*

*Aug. de Catech. Rud. C. 23.*

*Ma. 24. 34.*

*Act. 24. 17.*

*1 Cor. 16. 3.*

*Hom. 11. in Act.*



Example of Believers living in Common as a thing still Practicable, and as a means of converting all the Infidels. 'Tis to be supposed that these Saints of *Jerusalem* Laboured with their own Hands, since in so doing they did but follow the most perfect examples of Jesus Christ and his Apostles; nor can we suppose any thing too perfect of them: And this was also a considerable means of supplying their want of fixed Revenues.

'Tis said that they continued stedfast in the Doctrine of the Apostles, and they are commonly called by the Name of Disciples, from their applying themselves to the Learning of the Doctrine of Salvation; both by hearing the Apostles, who made frequent Discourses to them, and diligently Instructed them both in Publick and Private, delivering to them the same saving Truths, they themselves had received from the Lord: And likewise in reading the Holy Scriptures and conferring upon them among themselves, 'Tis added that they continued in Prayer, and that they went Dayly to the Temple, assembling themselves in *Solomon's* Porch, and there with one accord joyning in Prayer. The Example of St. *Peter* and St. *John* going up together into the Temple at the hour of Prayer, being the Ninth hour, makes it probable, that they then observed the same hours

hours of Prayers which the Church hath always since kept to. As to their outward way of living, they conformed themselves to the rest of the *Jews*, observing all the Ceremonies of the Law, even to the Offering of Sacrifices; which they continued to do as long as the Temple was standing: And this is what the Fathers called, Giving the Synagogue an honourable Interment.

After Prayer the Scripture takes notice of the breaking of Bread, by which there, as in several other Places of the New-Testament, is signified the Eucharist. They Celebrated this Mystery not in the Temple, where they could not be at liberty enough to do it, and where the Christians were intermixed with the *Jews*; but in private Houses with onely the Faithful amongst themselves. It was attended, as the Peace-Offerings under the Law, with a Repast; the use of which continued for a long time amongst Christians under the Name of *Agape*, which Word signifies Love, as much as to say, Love-Feasts. It is said, that these Feasts were accompanied with Gladness and singleness of Heart. And indeed all the Faithful by their Humility, Simplicity and Purity of Heart were as so many little Children; Innocent and Inoffensive. And by their renouncing the vain hopes and En-joy-

Baron. an.  
34. 12.  
250.

Aug. ep. 19.

joyments of this Life, they cut off all occasions of Vexatious and Disquieting Passions, as leaving no matter for them to work upon, and having their Thoughts wholly taken up with the hopes of Heaven, and the expectation of the Kingdom of Christ, which they looked upon as very near at hand. And if we cannot without wonder so much as Read that little which the Scripture hath left to us in Writing concerning the first Church, we may easily imagine how much they must have been beloved and admired by those who were the Spectators of their Vertues.

This first Church Subsisted at *Jerusalem* for near the space of forty Years under the Direction of the Apostles, and particularly of St. *James* their Bishop; till the Christians seeing, according to the Predictions of our Saviour, the Judgments denounced against that unhappy City near approaching, Separated themselves from the Unbelieving *Jews*, and retired to the little City of *Pella*, where they enjoyed a safe retreat, during the Siege of *Jerusalem*.

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IN the mean time there were formed several other Churches in divers parts of the World, Composed both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; which though they came not up to this height of Perfection, yet were great Examples of Vertue and Holiness; especially if we consider the state of the *Gentiles* before their Conversion.

They who are unacquainted with the History of past Ages are apt to imagine, that the Men who lived in the World sixteen hundred Years ago were more simple, more innocent, and more easily instructed than are the Men of this Generation; And that because they have heard say, that the World is in a state of Declension and grows worse and worse; and because they still see the marks of the Simplicity and easie Temper of our honest Forefathers. But they who have made any Reflection on the Writings left us by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, plainly see the contrary. The Preaching of the Gospel began under the Reigns of the Emperors *Claudius* and *Nero*. What kind of Courts these Emperors had, and the Vices that there Reigned we may see in *Tacitus*: The Manners and practices of the same Age are to be seen in *Horace*, in *Juvenal*, in *Martial*, and in *Petronius*. That these Authors blushed not at the Infamous Impurities with which they have stuffed

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II.  
PART.  
The time of the Persecutions. The state of the *Gentiles* before their Conversion.



their Writings, is because the Men of that Age blushed not to commit them. They thought they might take the Liberty of Publickly exposing what others as Publickly practised. And there seems to be a special Providence in it that these Books, otherwise so pernicious, should be preserved to us, to shew out of what an Abyss of Corruption, Jesus Christ recovered Mankind. We find the same *Ordures* in *Suetonius*, in the other Writers of the *Historia Augusta* for the two Ages following, in *Lucian*, in *Apuleius*, in *Athenaeus*, in a Word, in all the Authors

*Aug. Civit.*  
ii. C. iv.  
*Cypr. ep. i.*  
*Clem. Alex.*  
*Pædag. lib.*  
ii.

who give us an account of their Manners. The Fathers themselves upon this Subject are forced to use great openness and freedom of Speech, as amongst the rest *St. Austin*, *Tertullian*, *St. Clemens Alexandrinus*; so that, that frightful Catalogue of the Vices of the Heathen World, which *St. Paul* hath given us in the beginning of his Epistle to the *Romans* will not appear strange.

This Corruption of Manners took its course through *Greece*, *Aegypt*, and the *East* to *Rome*. 'Tis but casting ones Eyes upon *Aristophanes* to see to what height of Dissolution the *Greeks* were even in those Days arrived; and 'tis a thing but too certain that they did not after his time become more Wise; on the contrary, they made

made still farther Improvements in Luxury and Effeminacy. The Lives of the Kings of *Macedonia*, of *Aegypt*, and *Syria* furnished History with a New stock and variety of examples of the most monstrous Vices and Impurities. 'Tis well known for what *Alexandria*, *Antioch* and *Corinth* were famed, and how noted for their Voluptuousness and Effeminacy were the Cities of *Jonia* and the *Lesser Asia*: Yet in the midst of this general Corruption was it, that Christianity took its Birth: 'twas in the midst of these very Cities that the most famous Churches were founded. This Dissolution was not onely Universal, overspreading the whole *Roman Empire*; but publick, open, avowed and Authorised, nay even Consecrated by their Religion its self. Learned Men know what were the Ceremonies of *Bacchus*, and *Cybele*. Wherever one passed one met with a *Venus*, an *Adonis*, a *Ganymede*, and a *Jupiter* in all Disguises. There was not a Garden or Orchard without the Idol of that Ridiculous God whom they made the Guardian of the Place. Their common Songs and Poems were upon the Amours of their Gods, and most of their Publick Spectacles, were abominable Scenes either of Impurity or Cruelty.

The ordinary Divertisements of the *Roman* People were to force Men to fight and Murder one another, or to see them torn to pieces by Wild Beasts: Frequently upon the most trifling occasions, they put their Slaves to the Rack, and to the most horrible Tortures. The Governours of Provinces did often exercise excessive Cruelties upon such as were not *Romans*. The Emperors put to Death whomsoever they pleased, without any Form of Law, so that bad Princes spilt a great deal of Blood, even of the most Noble *Romane* themselves. Nor was their Avarice inferior to their Cruelty. All the World Groaned under their Frauds, Perjuries, Falsities, unjust prosecutions and violent Oppressions; of all which, we need no other proof than *Cicero's* Oration. If in the time of the Republick, *Verres* in one Province, in the space of three Years, committed so many Enormities, what must have been done throughout the whole Empire under *Nero* or *Domitian* by the many Governours, chosen out of their own Favourites, who were in no fear of being called to account, but on the contrary, both encouraged by the Example and supported by the Authority of their Princes? But I fear I spend too many Words upon a thing too evident in its self.

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Such then were those out of whom were made those Christians I am going to describe. When once they were washed and Sanctified, they were no longer the same Creatures they had been before: Yet not to conceal that Good that was in them, we must not disown but that there were in many of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, some kind of hopeful Dispositions and Tendencies towards Vertue. 1 Cor. vi. xi.

—In the first place, they had much of that Politeness that necessarily carries along with it many good qualities, which we may call ~~superficial~~ *Vertues*; as Gravity, Pacience and Obligingness in Conversation, Complaisance, Chearfulness, and a lively way of expressing their Esteem or Affection, with a true sense of *Decorum* and decency in every Action, of which the *Greeks* were compleat Masters. All this a Man may have without solid Vertue, or be wanting in these things without being an ill Man, or a vicious Person: And yet Vertue seems not Compleatly perfect without this exterior Dress to recommend her Beauty, and set her off to advantage. Besides this, there were amongst them, the *Greeks* especially, many true Philosophers, that is to say, Persons who did in good earnest, and with the utmost powers of their Reason seek after the means of becoming Happy; who seriously

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Recognit.  
Clem. init.  
Justin. in  
Tryphinit.

riously laboured to come to the Knowledge of the Truth, who honestly applied themselves to the practice of Vertue according to the best of their knowledge; and who to pursue this study, renounced all other Interests and Engagements, sparing neither Cost, nor Labour, nor Travails to attain to the knowledge of those things which they accounted the most excellent. Nor were the *Romans* so universally Degenerate, but that there were many among them who maintained that Generosity, that Greatness of Soul, that Constancy and firmness of Mind, and other such like Vertues for which their Ancestors were so Renowned,

The Grace of the Gospel being super-added to these happy dispositions of Nature, could not but produce admirable Effects. St. *Cornelius*, the first of the Gentiles that received this Grace, was a *Roman* Captain. The bravery of the *Roman* spirit appears in many of the glorious Martyrs, as St. *Laurence*, St. *Vincent*, St. *Sebastian*, and in many great Bishops; as St. *Cyprian*, St. *Ambrose*, St. *Leo*, &c. As for the Gravity of the *Greek* Philosophers, one may see it in the Acts of S. *Polycarp*, in those of St. *Pionius*, Priest of *Smyrna*; and in the Writings of St. *Justin* and St. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and in the same writings we also find a vast reach of Learning, joined with

with the finest Politeness. The Humility of a Christian having qualified the haughty Air of the *Romans*, and the scornful Pride of the Philosophers, made of them true Sages: Faith having once discovered to them the true end upon which they ought to fix, from that time forward they minded nothing else. These Persons (even in their Gentile state) so improved, and refin'd being now by the grace of the Gospel further cleansed from all their Impurities, and having learnt to be sincere, became also Gentle, Meek and Peaceable, without Artifice and Disguise.

Thus the Christian Religion established its self in the midst of the *Roman* Empire, and in *Rome* its self, when it was in its most flourishing Condition, in the most enlightened Age that ever was; and at the same time the most corrupt. Nor could the Divinity of the Gospel more gloriously have displayed its Power, than in triumphing over those two dispositions in Man, that are most opposite to it; that is Vanity of Knowledge and Corruption of Manners; so victoriously carrying on its Progress in the World; while on the one hand Science, an exalted Understanding, resisted the simplicity of its Doctrine; and the Humility of Faith, on the other, Depravity of Heart, and corruption of Manners, opposed the purity of its Mo-

als, and the severity of its practices. This was necessary to be the more particularly insisted on, that none may imagine as if the Apostles had to do with only a Gross heavy sort of People, that might easily be made to believe any thing that was told them. And this Consideration hath *Tertullian* long since urged against the Heathens 'Twas not (says he) with Jesus Christ as with Numa. He had a rough unhewn sort of People to deal with, stupid and easy to be imposed on; and therefore to tame and break them into some kind of Discipline, invented a Religion suited to their gross Capacities, and proper to serve his ends; imbarressed them with a multitude of Deities, and prescribing a number of Ceremonies, by which he assured them of their Favour. But Jesus Christ coming into the World, when Learning was at its height, when Men were blinded with too much Wisdom, and Knowledge was their Disease; even then opened their Eyes to the discerning of the Truth, and made Faith to Triumph over Philosophy.

IV. THE Method they used in Preaching the Gospel, was different, according to the different Dispositions of the Persons they had to deal with. The Jews they pressed with the Prophecies, and other proofs taken from the Scripture, and with their own Traditions. The Gentiles they managed

Preaching, teaching and Baptism.

Ambrosius in Luc 9. 21. lib. 6. c. ult.

ged by Arguments and Ratiocinations; and those sometimes more plain and simple, sometimes more subtil and elaborate, variously Accommodating themselves to their Capacities; and therefore frequently urging against them the Authorities of their own admired Poets and Philosophers. Miracles raised the attention, and had equal force upon both Jews and Gentiles. The Acts of the Apostles furnish us with Examples of all these different kinds of Preaching. They spoke of the things of God only to those that heard them with seriousness and attention. As soon as they perceived the Infidels to grow weary of their Discourses, or (as it often happened) begin to laugh at them; the Christians presently broke off, and said no more; least they should profane Holy things, and give occasion to the Heathen to Blaspheme. In time they began to publish some Writings, to shew the Heathens upon what weak Foundations the Pagan Worship stood, and disengage them from their Prejudices; such are St. *Justin Martyr's* Admonition to the Gentiles, and that of St. *Clement Alexandrinus*. But that by which they most prevailed, was Miracles, (yet frequently in the Church) the holy Lives of Christians, and their constancy in suffering Martyrdom.

Act. ii. xiv. iii. xii. xiii. xvi. xiv. xiv. xvii. xxii.

Cle. Recog. I. Just. in Tryph.

When

*Acta. S. S.*  
*Hippol. &*  
*Euf. ap. ba-*  
*ron. an. n.*  
*xii.*

*Orig. Contr*  
*Cels. 8.*

*Euseb. 6.*  
*Hist. 15.*

When any one desired to become a Christian, they lead him to the Bishop, or to some Priest, who in the first place took him into Examination, to see whether his Profession was sincere and well grounded: For sometimes they were imposed upon by Impostors, who pretended themselves Converts only to ensnare the Christians, and betray them to their Persecutors. Besides they were afraid of charging themselves with weak and unstable Souls, who might by their falling away upon the first Tryal of Persecution, dishonour the Church. After all these precautions, they carefully instructed the *Catechumen* in all the Principles of Religion, but chiefly in the Practices of it; that he might know before Hand how he was to govern himself after his Baptism. To teach these Rules of good Living, is the subject of the *Pædagogus* of St. *Clemens*, who succeeded St. *Pantenus* the Philosopher, in the School of *Alexandria*; that is, in the Office of instructing those who were disposed to turn Christians. St. *Clemens* was succeeded in the same charge by *Origen*; who to ease himself of part of the burden, took to his assistance St. *Heracles*, committing to his care the new comers to be initiated in the first Rudiments of Religion,

When

When the Bishop judged the *Catechumens* sufficiently instructed and approved, he admitted them to Baptism; this was done (if they could chuse the time) on Easter or V. nitsunday Eve: But if there were any pressing Occasions, (as when the Persecution was on foot,) they Baptised at any time; yet they had then also their Baptisteries Consecrated to this use, and took care to prepare the *Catechumen*; obliging him to fast the whole Day before he was Baptized, Interrogating him, and making him give an account of his Faith. After Baptism, the Bishop immediately Confirmed him; and at the same time offered the holy Sacrifice, and gave him the Communion; and caused him to eat of the Blessed Milk and Hony, in token of his Spiritual Infancy, and entrance into the true Land of Promise; that is the Church. They Baptised the Children of Believers, whensoever their Parents presented them, tho' under the years of Discretion, and even before the eighth Day; and generally chose to give them the Names of the Apostles, or of other Persons that had been remarkable for their Piety. But as for Persons Adult it doth not appear that they changed their names; since we meet with so many Saints, whose names came from the false Gods, as *Dionysius*, *Martinus*, *Bacchus*, *Deme-*

*Acta. S.*  
*Cornelii P.*  
*ap. Bar. an.*  
*255. n. 60.*  
*Acta. SS.*  
*Hippoly. &*  
*Euf. sup. n.*  
*x, xi.*

*Acta. S.*  
*Steph. P. P.*  
*ap. Bar. an.*  
*259. n. 2.*

*Acta. S.*  
*Suf. an. 194*  
*9. 12.*  
*Tertuli.*  
*in Marci-*  
*on. c. xiv.*

*S. Cyp.*

*Dionys.*  
*Al. ap Euf.*  
*lib. 7. c. 20.*

*Demetrius.* The new Baptised were afterwards assisted by those who had presented them to Baptism; as also by the Priests, who for a long time after, overlooked them that they might improve in the practice of Christianity.

V.  
The  
Christian  
Life.  
Prayer.  
1 Tim. 2.  
8.

i Thes. v.  
xvii.

Ignat. Ep.  
ad Ephes.  
& al.

Tertul.  
Apol. c. 39.

Mat. xviii.  
xviii, xix.

AND now they began a new Life, a Life altogether Spiritual and super-natural. The first and principal thing to which they applied themselves was Prayer, as being that which St. Paul also in the first place recommended. And as the Apostle according to the Precept of Jesus Christ, exhorts Christians to pray without ceasing; so they avoided as much as was possible all Avocations that might interrupt their Devotions, or take off the Soul from God and Heavenly things. They Prayed as often as they could in Common; as believing that the more they were, who joined together in putting up the same Petitions to God, the more prevailing would they prove to obtain the grant of them; according to that saying of our Saviour, *If two of you shall agree on Earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven: For where two or three are gathered together in my name; there am I in the midst of them.* Besides, the presence of their Pastors gave more solemnity to their Prayers, and the

reci-

reciprocal Examples of each others Fervour and Humility, mutually heightened their Devotions.

Of their Publick Prayers, the most usual and most frequented were those of Morning and Evening; now called *Matins* and *Vespers*. Thus were they taught to sanctify the beginning and ending of the Day, and not allowed to excuse themselves upon the pretence of Business; these Spiritual concerns being a business of that Importance, that all other ought to give place to it. The *Matins* or Morning service, now called *Lauds* from those *Hymns* there rehearsed, that seem to have succeeded in the room of the Morning Sacrifice of the old Law: It still continues one of the most solemn Parts of the Office, as appears by the Commemorations, the Luminary, and the Incense. The *Vespers* stand in stead of the Evening Sacrifice, and were appointed to Sanctify the beginning of the Night. They are sometimes called the Prayer of the Lamps, being performed at the close of the Day, or toward Candle-light: And in the Hymns yet used in these *Vespers*, we find mention of Light, and of Supper, which generally followed soon after the end of these Prayers. Such as could not pay their attendance upon the Publick Prayers of the Church, as Persons Sick, Imprisoned, or Travelling

Const. Ap.  
2. 59.

Lucerna-  
rium.

O Lux.  
beata Tri-  
nit.

Lucis Cre-  
ator Opt.

Conditor  
almae fid.

Verg. mun-  
di vespere.

Ad can-  
am Agni

met prov.



met together as many as could in Private; or if they were wholly alone; yet every one observed to make his Prayers at the stated Hours.

*v. Baron.* For besides these *Matins* and *Vespers*,  
*an 34. n.* they had their Prayers also at the Third,  
*251. &c.* Sixth, and Ninth Hours, and within  
*Const. Ap.* Night. *Tertullian*, *St. Cyprian*, and *St.*  
*8. 34. 35.* *Athanasius* make express mention of all  
*&c.* these Prayers, founding them upon Ex-  
*Tert. adv.* amples taken out of the Old and New-  
*Psych. c. 10.* Testaments, and giving Mysterious Rea-  
*Cypr. de* sons for the several Appointments. These  
*Orat. dom.* Hours were reckoned according to the  
*in fine.* usage of the *Romans*, who divided the  
*Athan. de* whole Day from Sun-rising to Sun-setting  
*virg.* into twelve Hours, equal in every Day; but unequal in the course of the Year, always changing their Proportions according to the length or shortness of the Days. The Night they also divided into twelve Hours, and four Parts, which they named watches or Stations; because in their Armies, the Guards were relieved but four times a Night; so that reducing their Hours to the present computation, and taking an *Æquinoctial* Day to do it by; the Prime or first Hour of the Day with them, begins at our Six at Morning, their Third at our Ninth, their Sixth at our Twelvth, their Ninth at our Three in the Afternoon, and their Twelvth at our Six  
 at

at Night: So that their daily Prayers returned every third Hour.

They had also their Midnight Prayers, according to the president set them by the Psalmist, and by *St. Paul* and *Silas*, who after having been Scourged and cast into Prison, were heard Praying and Singing Praises unto God at Midnight. *Tertullian* makes mention of this Night Prayer, *St. Cyprian* highly applauds it; and this practice of Watching unto Prayer, is recommended by all the Fathers as an excellent means of Mortifying the Flesh, and of lifting up the Soul to God more freely in that still Season. They were also taught to make the best use of their waking Intervals, in Meditating upon the Psalms and the Lord's Prayer; and every Morning, or when ever they were threatned with any danger, to repeat the Creed.

In a Word, to take all occasions of making still fresh and fresh Applications to God, and to come as near as possibly they could, to the rule of Praying always; they had their particular Prayers for every action, taking their rule from the Words of *St. Paul*; 'whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him. Thus all their Country labours, as Plowing the Ground, Sowing it, Reaping their Corn; gather-  
 ing

*Bar. an.*  
*51. n. 68,*  
*&c.*  
*Pf. 119. 62.*  
*Act. 16. 25.*  
*Tertul. 2.*  
*ad uxor. c.*  
*4.*  
*Cypr. de*  
*Or. in fine.*  
*Cle. Alex.*  
*2 ped. c. 9.*  
*Chry. Hom.*  
*26. in Ac-*  
*ta. 14. in*  
*ep. Rom.*

*Col. iii. vii.*

Chrys. Hom.  
v in Ep. ad  
Thes.

Tertul. de.  
Cor. c. iii.

St. Cyr. Hi-  
eropol. Ca-  
tech. iv. de.  
Ascens. et  
xiii. circa.  
fin.

Tertull ad  
uxor. v.

Martyrol.  
Rom. xii.

Janu. de S.  
Satyro.

ing their Fruits, were all begun and ended with Prayer. The building of an House; the entring to inhabit it; the making a piece of Cloath, or Suit of Cloths; the putting it on, and so of the rest; even the most common Actions of Life were in like manner begun with Prayer. We have still remaining in the Rituals, some of those Prayers in several sorts of Benedictions. The Salutation at the beginning of an Epistle, at the first Interview, or upon other such like occasions, was not only a Testimony of Friendship, but also a real Prayer. Upon all the most inconsiderable occasions, they made use of the sign of the Cross, as being a more compendious way of a Prayer and Blessing. They Crossed themselves upon the Forehead, and that almost every Minute; at every coming in, and going out; beginning a walk, sitting down, rising up, going to Bed at Night, dressing themselves in the Morning, putting on their Shoos, Eating, Drinking, &c. Upon any Temptation, they added to it the Sufflation, to drive away the Devil.

## VI.

The Study of the holy Scriptures.

THE greatest part of their Prayers was made up of the Psalms, which being Pronounced with a Grave and distinct Voice were highly Instructive, as containing in

in them a kind of summary or Abridgment of what lyes more dispers'd in the other sacred Books, and supplying a collection of those thoughts and reflexions which a Man should make in every condition of Life and upon every Emergency. With the Psalms they always joyned the reading of some other parts of Scripture, and from thence came in the little Chapters of the Hours. As the Night Prayers were always the Longest, so they had more *Lessons* belonging to them: And as the Mass is the most solemn part of all the Office, so it is that which had more of the Instructive part mixed with the Devotional. Nothing was read in the Church as Scripture and of Divine Inspiration but what was received into the Canon; that is to say, such as the Constant Tradition of the Churches had Authorised. Those other Writings which some Private Persons would have introduced where called Apocryphal, that is, hidden or obscure. To secure the Ecclesiastical Books from all change, and that neither the Boldness nor carelessness of the Transcribers, might make any Alterations in them, there was sometimes Joyned to them a Protestation Conjuring in the name of God, whosoever should Transcribe the Writing to do it Faithfully. Such an one did St. Irenaeus add to the

Athanas.  
Epist. ad  
Marcellin.

E

end



*Euseb. Hist.* end of his Epistle to *Florinus*, and of the  
*v. xx.* the like nature is that Menacing Clause  
*Apoc. xxii.* affixed to the Apocalyps.  
*18.*

The Church therefore was not only the House of Prayer, but the School of Salvation. The Bishops expounded to the People the Gospel and the other sacred Books, with the diligence of a publick Professor, but with far greater Authority. And therefore in the Stile of the Ancients the Title of Doctor, that is Teacher, is scarce given to any but Bishops. They instructed their Flock both Publickly in the Congregation of the Faithful, and  
*Act. xx. 20.* Privately, going (as was *St. Pauls* own Practise) from House to House: And as the same Apostle directs in his Epistles to *Titus* and *Timothy*, they variously applied their Instructions to the several conditions of Men. They professed that they  
*Ignat. Ep. ad Polycarp.* spake nothing of themselves, that they  
*Tertull. Prefat. c. viii.* kept to what was revealed; not pretending to make new discoveries after the Gospel, but Faithfully to Deliver to others what they themselves had received from their Fathers, that is, from the most Ancient Priests and Bishops living within the memory of Man, and they in like manner from others before them, and so backward by an uninterrupted Tradition, ascending up to the Apostles themselves. They Imprinted in the minds of the Faithful

ful, an Abhorrence for all kind of Novelty, more Especially in the Doctrinals of Religion: So that if any private Persons heard any thing contrary to the Faith, they never amused themselves about contradicting or confuting it; that care they left to their Pastors: They only stopped their Ears against it, and would have nothing to do with it. And this is the reason why so many Heresies, which started up in the first Ages, were silenced and came to nothing without the Interposing of Councils, or any formal proceedings of the Church against them. The Catholick Pastors unanimously consented in the same Traditions, and the People inviolably adhered to the Doctrine of their Pastors.

\* The Faithful studied the Word of God in private every one by him self, meditating upon it both Day and Night. They used to read over again in their Houses what they had heard read at the Church, to fix in their Memories the expositions of the Pastors, and to discourse them over among themselves. Above all, the Fathers of Families took care to make these Repetitions to their Domesticks. For every Master of a Family was within the Walls of his own House as it were a private Pastor, keeping up therein a regular Course of Praying and

*Pap. apud Euseb. Hist. iii. c. 38.*

*Ignat. ep. ad Trall. et al.*

*const. A. post. iv. c. 10.*

Reading; instructing his Wife, Children and Servants; and in a plain and familiar way Administring proper Exhortations to them; and thus preserving all that belonged to him in the Unity of the Church, by the entire Submission, he himself paid to his Pastor. What I have said of Fathers is also to be understood of Mothers, who took the same Religious care of their Children. St. *Basil*, and his Brother St. *Gregory Nyssene*, Glory in their having kept the Faith, which they received from their Grand-Mother *Macrina*, and she from St. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*. And it seems to be upon this account that St. *Paul* gives so particular a Character of the Faith of the Mother and Grand-Mother of St. *Timothy*. One proof of the special care that Parents took in the well instructing their Families, is that we do not find in all Antiquity any such thing as a Catechism for little Children, nor any publick provision made for the Instruction of those that were Baptised before they came to Years of Discretion. Every private House was then, saith St. *Chrysostom*, as a Church to it self.

There were even many Lay Christians that had the Holy Scripture by heart; so constant were they in the Reading of it. They generally carryed a Bible about them, making it their Companion where ever

ever they went; and many Saints have been found Buryed with the Gospel lying on their Breasts. St. *Chrysostom* tells us that in his time, many Women wore it hanging at their Necks: That they washed their Hands, when they received those Holy Books: That every one expressed his inward Regard for them by the tokens of external Reverence, at the Reading and Hearing of them, the Men uncovering their Heads, and the Women (such was their way of expressing Reverence) covering theirs. For Women read the Scriptures no less than Men. We find some of those Holy Female Martyrs, who in the *Diocletian* Persecution having been forced to quit all they had, and hide themselves in Caves, Regretted nothing else but the loss of their Bibles, and their being thereby deprived of those Blessed Consolations which they before enjoyed in exercising themselves Day and Night, in those sacred Writings.

Besides the Scriptures themselves, the Christians had also for their reading the Writings of their Bishops and other Ecclesiastical Authors; plenty of whom, and those of great Note, these first Ages produced. *Eusebius* gives us an account of about forty by name, besides those whose Works came forth without the name of the Author, and those whom he

In Mat.  
Hom. LXXII.

In Jo. Hom.  
LIII. Mor.

Acta SS.  
Agapes, &c.  
ap Bar. an.  
304. n. 46.

Euseb. iv.  
et v. Hist.

only mentions in general. Not but that the greatest part of the Bishops of these times, declined Writing Books, out of Modesty, for fear of divulging the Mysteries of their Religion, for want of Leisure, and by reason of the Persecutions, which suffered but a few of them, to Live any great Age. But many occasions there were that forced some of them upon Writing, both concerning the affairs of the Churches, and in the defence of Religion against the *Hereticks* and *Pagans*. Besides, there were so many Persons of learning, so many Philosophers and Orators, throughout the whole Empire, especially in *Greece* and the *East*, that there were always found among the Christians a great number of good Writers.

Const. A-  
post. i. 5.

The Faithful were Advised to abstain from reading the Books of the Heathens, since they might possibly overthrow the Faith of the Weak, and at best signified little. *For what, saith an ancient Author, would you have, which you may not meet with in the Word of God? If you are for History; you have the Books of the Kings: If for Philosophy and Poetry; you have the Prophets, the Book of Job, and the Proverbs of Solomon; where you will find more true Wit and Spirit, than in all the Poets and Philosophers, because they are the Words of God, who is Wisdom itself: If for Songs; you*

*you have the Psalms: If for Antiquities; Geneses; In a Word, the Glorious Law of the Lord, furnishes you with all necessary, precepts and useful Directions.* Yet the Bishops and Priests found it to their purpose, to read the profane Authors, and made good use of them in their Contests with the *Gentiles*, Fighting them with their own Weapons, the Authorities of their Poets and Philosophers. They professed to embrace all Truth, whence soever it came; and wheresoever they found it, they challenged it for their own, as being the Disciples of Jesus Christ who is the *Word*, that is to say, the sovereign Reason.

Logos St.  
Clem. Al. l.  
Strom.

'T WAS principally to the Rich that they recommended the reading of the Scripture as their constant Employment, and a proper Remedy against the Sins of Idleness and Curiosity. As for others, they followed every one his Calling, that they might have where withal to maintain themselves, pay their Debts, and give Alms. And they took care to chuse such callings as were most consistent with Retirement and Humility. Many of their Rich ones reduced themselves to a voluntary Poverty by distributing what they had among the Poor; especially in times of Persecution, thereby to put themselves

VII.  
Their  
Employ-  
ments, Oc-  
cupations,  
and Pro-  
fessions.

Const. A.  
post. i. iv.

in a readiness for Martyrdom. The first Disciples of the Apostles, who laboured together with them in the Propagation of the Gospel, practiced the same Method; but for a nobler end. They sold their Possessions, and gave the price of them to the Poor, that so they might be more disengaged, and at liberty to quit their Country, Travel abroad, and carry the Gospel into the most distant parts of the World. Many Christians laboured with their Hands only to avoid the Sin of Idleness. For they were earnestly exhorted to shun this particular Vice among many others, the inseparable Companions of it; as a restless temper, Curiosity, Detraction, insignificant Visits, Gadding and Rambling, Prying into and Censuring the Actions of their Neighbours. On the contrary, all Persons were advised to keep themselves quiet and not meddle in other Mens matters, and to be employed upon some useful Business, but principally in the Works of Charity toward the Sick, the Poor, and all others whose Condition required their Assistance.

The Christians Life therefore, was a continued course of Prayer, Reading and Labour, which regularly succeeded one the other in their proper Hours, and suffered no other interruptions than just what the necessities of Life required. But what

Oc-

Euf. iii. 17.

ii Thes. iii. 6, &amp;c.

Cass. de Sp. Acced. c. vii.

Const. Ap. i. iv. ii. ult.

Clem. P. c. dag. iii. c. x.

Occupation soever they followed, they always made it but as a by-work in comparison of Religion, which they look'd upon as their main concern, and that one thing needful about which they were to be employed all the Days of their Life. They pretended not to any particular Profession or Denomination; but purely and simply to be Christians. They owned no other Title or Character but that; and when the Judge Interrogated them concerning their name, their Country, their Quality; their answer to all was, *I am a Christian.*

They liked not such Employments as too much busy and dissipate the Thoughts, as Merchandizing, Soliciting of Business, bearing Publick Offices: Yet they always continued in the Callings they followed before their Baptism, if there were nothing in them inconsistent with Religion. Thus Soldiers were not upon their turning Christians obliged to quit the Service; they were only taught to observe the Soldier's Rule laid down in the Gospel; to be content with their Wages, and to abstain from Fraud and Violence. There were a great number of Christians that bore Arms; Witness the *Legio Fulminans* in the time of *Marcus Aurelius*, and the *Theban* Legion, who all of them, together with their Tribune *St. Mauritius*,  
Pati-

Const. Ap. ii. 61. 63.

Orig. Cont. Cels. viii. in fin.

i Cor. vii.

xx.

Tertul. de

Cor. c. xii.

Tert. Apol.

c. xxxvii.

Luk. iii. 13.

Patiently submitted to Martyrdom; tho' with their Swords in their Hands. The old Military Discipline of the Romans, as yet continued in force, which consisted principally in Frugality, in Labour, in Obedience, in Patience; all of them Vertues proper for a Christian to be Exercised in: Yet some of them refused to list themselves, and others, already engaged quitted the Service, to avoid the joining with the Infidels in their Superstitions; as the Eating of things Offered to Idols, the adoring the Ensigns, and in them the false Gods, whose Images they bore; the Swearing by the Genius of the Emperor, and Crowning themselves with Flowers at their profane Solemnities.

*Acta Mar.  
Theb. ap.  
Baron. an.  
ccxcvii.*

*Acta St.  
Marcelli.  
Centur. ap.  
Bar. an.  
ccxcviii. n.  
ii.*

*Tertul. de  
Corona.*

### VIII.

*Their  
Fasts.  
Mat. ix. xv.*

THE Christians Fasted often, according to what our Saviour had said; That after he should be taken from them, his Disciples should Fast. From the very first Ages of Christianity in Remembrance of this; that is, of the Passion of Jesus Christ, they had their fixed and solemn Fasts; as that of *Lent* for every Year; and of *Wednesday* and *Friday* for every Week: They Fasted also for the Ordinations; and upon several other occasions, when the Bishops prescribed Fasts for the publick Necessities; to say nothing now of

of their Pennances and particular Devotions.

On their Fasts they eat but once a Day, and that not till towards the Evening; that is, in *Lent*, not till after the *Vespers*, toward the beginning of the Night; and on other Days not till after three a Clock; and such were their ordinary Fasts. They had also their greater Fasts; as that of the holy Week, the whole of which, many amongst them passed without eating, at least the three last Days of it. Many also out of their private Devotion kept their particular Fasts to themselves, and abstained from eating for two or three Days together; especially upon great Occasions, as when they prepared themselves for Martyrdom: Some there were who passed whole Weeks or ten Days without taking any Food, as *Lucian* (an unsuspected Witness in this Matter) assures us. All in general on their Fast-Days abstained from drinking Wine and eating Flesh; the greatest part fed only on Herbs or Pulse, with a little Bread, others allowed themselves little Fishes; but on those Days never use any sort of high Sauces or relishing Delicacies: They confined themselves to cheap and Ordinary Diet, always expending less upon their Tables on Fast-Days, than at other Seasons. Some observed *Omophagy*; that is

*v. Ep. Can.  
Dion. alex.*

*Luc. in  
Philopat.*

is to say, eating their Food raw and undressed; others *Xerophagy*; that is, feeding only upon dry Diets, as Nuts, Almonds and such like Fruits; and others confined themselves only to Bread and Water.

I know that Men will now a Days think themselves little concerned with these Examples: They imagin that these ancient Austerities are now become impracticable. The strength of Nature, say they, is impaired by the course of so many Years: Men do not live so long now as they did of old; nor are their Bodies so Robust. But I would fain have them give some Proofs of this alteration; for we are not here speaking of the Heroick times of antient *Greece*, nor of the Lives of the Patriarches, nor of those who lived before the Flood: We are upon the times of the first *Roman* Emperors, and of the other *Greek* and *Latin* Writers, sufficiently known to us. Let them drive the matter as far as they please, they will not be able to shew that the Life of Man hath been shortned for sixteen hundred Years: From thence, and from a long time before, the Age of Man was limited to Threescore and ten, or fourscore Years. In the first Age of Christianity, though there were as yet some *Greeks* and

*Romans*

Pf. xc. x.

*Romans* who practiced the Gymnaſtick Exercises to preserve their Bodies in good Health; yet there were more who enfeebled them by their excesses; particularly by those kind of Debauches which tend most to the ruin of Health, and which still make so many of the Eastern People grow old so long before their time. In the mean time, out of these most corrupted places, as *Agypt* and *Syria*, came the greatest Fasters, and these Persons prolonged the term of their Lives beyond other Men. 'Tis true such Fasting was a thing more easily practiced by the People of those hot Countries, than it can be by us. And yet we find great Examples of Abstinence, even in *Gaul*, and other colder Regions; and that more than a Thousand Years after the Apostles; for the ancient Rule of Fasting (as we shall see hereafter) continued down to the time of St. *Bernard*.

The Christians, as well as *Jews*, considered Fasting as a State of Affliction: 'Tis true, the *Jews* applied it to the satisfying the natural Passion of Grief; as when they fasted upon the loss of some dear Friend or Relation; or upon any other misfortune purely Temporal: To the same purpose was it practiced by other Nations. And we find that the *Greeks* and *Romans*, together with other signs of



of Mourning, joined that of Fasting. But the Christians applied all to a Spiritual end; using these exterior Testifications of Grief only as they tended to excite in them that Godly sorrow that worketh Repentance to Salvation; that is, to give them Compunction for their Sins. A sinner saith St. Cyprian, *ought to lament the Death of his Soul, at least as much as the loss of a Friend*; and St. Chrysostom makes use of the same Comparifon. They considered Fasting also as a Prefervative againft Temptation by weakning the Flefh, and and bringing it into Subjection to the Spirit; and therefore with their Fasting, they Joyned the Abftaining from all forts of Pleafures even the moft Innocent. *Marryed Perfons* during thofe Seasons, obferved Continence. They all in general lived in greater Silence and Solitude, were more frequent in vifiting the Churches, and fpent more of their Hours in Reading and Praying on their Fast-Days than at other times.

IX.  
Their  
Eating.

St. Clem.  
Alex. ii.  
Pedag. i.

IN their Diet, and way of Eating, the Christians alwaies (even out of their Fast-Days) obferved great Frugality and Moderation. They were taught not to Live to Eat, but to Eat to Live. That the end of Food being Health and Strength, and the keeping the Body in a condition fit

fit for Labour; all beyond this was Superfluous and Exceffive. Twas not therefore for a Christian to Study the Art of Eating, or to Indulge the wantonness of the Appetite; to hanker after curious Difhes, sumptuous Feasts, or thofe delicacies of the Palate which could not come to the Table, without the Affiftance of skilful Cooks and the Science of the Kitchen. They applyed to themselves that faying of St. Paul in a literal Sence, and made a general Rule of it: *It is good neither to eat Flefh nor to drink Wine.* Twas more especially to Women, and all young People; they prefcribed the abftaining from Wine; and as for them that Drank it, they alwaies qualified it with Water. If they fed on Liveing Creatures, it was rather of Fifh or Fowls, than of the groffer Subftance of four-footed Beasts, which they looked upon as too Succulent and over Nourifhing. But they alwaies abftained from Blood, and from things Strangled, according to the Decifion of the Council of the Apostles which continued to be obferved for many Ages; fo that many of them lived only upon Sallads, Fruits or Pulfe: Nay farther yet, many there were, who finding Pulfe (as Peas, Beans and Lentils) too nourifhing for them that would fubdue the Flefh, reduced themselves to the living

1 Rom. xiv.

xxi.

Hier. ad  
Furiam.

Clem. 2.

P. edag. 2.

Rud. Hymn  
ante cib.

Tertul. Ap.  
c. ix.

Acts xv.

xxix.

Min. Fel.

Olus.  
Rom. xiv. ii.

ing simply on Herbs with a little Bread and Salt, taking the Words of St. Paul in a literal Sence, *Another who is weak eateth Herbs.*

'Tis true, this Abstinence was not a thing so Extraordinary in their Days as it would be in ours: For though the Luxury of the Table was then grown to great Excess, as one may see in the Greek and Latin Writers of those times, particularly in *Athenaus*; yet it fell short of that extravagance to which we have now advanced it. The Ægyptians and many other Orientalists still kept up their Religious Abstinenes. The Abstinence of the *Pythagoreans* was in great reputation, as

Inde domum me  
Ad porri  
& ciceris  
refero lagenique  
cattinum. lib. i.  
Sat. 6.

Nec modica cenan-  
te times  
olus omne  
patella. i.  
ep. v.  
Suet. in  
Aug. 76.

appears by the Example of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, and by the Writings of *Porphyry*. *Horace*, as great an Epicurean as he was, names only some Pulse and Herbs as his ordinary Diet, and inviting his Friend to Supper, Promises him no better Chear. The Emperor *Augustus* lived mostly on Brown-Bread, Cheese, Figs, Dates, Raisons, and small Fish. One might produce a Multitude of like Examples. Their common usage was to make but one set Meal a Day; and that at Night when all the Business of the Day was over, and every one was retired to his Home; this was their Supper or *Cena*: For as for that which they called *Prandium*, it was

ra-

rather a Breakfast than a set Dinner, after the manner of our Dinners, since it was only a light repast to support Nature throughout the whole Day following; and many made no Dinner at all. 'Tis reckoned as an high instance of the Intemperance of the Emperor *Vitellius*, that he often made four Meals a Day, but always three.

The Christians lived at least as regularly as the Heathens; I mean as the wisest among them; and used only a very simple Diet; rather of such things as did not require Fire or much dressing, than such as could not be eaten without being first prepared by Fire. They made at most but two Meals a Day; absolutely condemning (according to what the Apostles had taught them) those Revellings or Collations after Supper which were called *Comestations*; by means of which, the Nights were commonly passed away in Debauches. The Meal how simple and light soever it might be, both began and ended with long Prayers; And *Prudentius* hath composed two *Hymns* to this purpose; in which we may see the Spirit of these first Ages set forth in lively Colours.

It was in these times, a common Custom to have something read to them as they sat at Meals. *Pliny* always used it,

F

and

Prandius  
non avide  
quintum  
interpellet  
inani ven-  
tre diem  
durare. Hor.  
i. lat. vi.  
Suet in Vi-  
tel. c. 13.

Gal. v. 21.

Rom. xiii.  
13.

i Pet. iv. 3.

Cathemer  
iii, iv.

Pli. iii. ep. v.

Sat. xii



Clem. ii.  
Pædag. iv.

i Cor. v. 10.  
ii. ibid. x.  
27.

and *Juvenal* inviting one of his Friends to sup with him, promises that he should have *Homer* and *Virgil* Read to him at Table. Instead of those profane Songs and Buffooneries with which the Heathens heightened the Pleasure of their Entertainments. The Christians at theirs, had the Holy Scriptures read to them, and the Singing of Spiritual Hymns, sett to Grave and Composed Airs: For they were not against Musick, nor did they condemn Mirth, provided it was an holy Joy and had God for its Object. They never eat together with Hereticks, or Persons Excommunicated, nor so much as with the Catechumens: But with the Infidels they sometimes did Eat and Converse.

X.  
The Modesty, Gravity, and Seriousness of Christians

THE same Modesty and Moderation did the Christians maintain in all their Actions, and throughout the whole Course of their Lives. They sought after no other greatness but the greatness and nobleness of Spirit, coveted no other Riches but their Spiritual Treasure, the Riches of the inner Man. They could not approve of those profuse Extravagances which had been introduced into the World by the Prodigious Wealth of the *Roman* Empire, as the vast expenses of their stately Buildings, and costly Fur-

Furniture; their Tables of Ivory, Bedsteads of Silver, and Hangings of Purple and Gold, Gold, and Silver Plate, enchaſed and ornamented with Precious Stones. When the Persecutors searched the Lodgings where St. *Domna*, a vast rich Virgin of *Nicomedia*, kept her self, and together with the Eunuch St. *Indus*, were shut up from the rest of the World; this was the rich Furniture they found in it: a Cross, the Acts of the Apostles, two Mats lying upon the Ground, an earthen Censer, a Lamp, a little Wooden-Box where they kept the Holy Sacrament to Communicate themselves.

With the like Modesty did the Christians decline all gaudy Habits, and above all the wearing of Silk; a Commodity in those Days so precious, that it was Sold for its weight in Gold: All over-costly Ornaments, as Rings beset with precious Stones, Jewels, and the like; Curled Locks, Perfumes and Unguents; the too frequent use of the Bath; and the too great Affectation of Modishness; in a Word, all that might tend to excite sensual desires, or gratify a voluptuous Inclination. *Prudentius*, as one of the first marks of the Conversion of St. *Cyprian*, observes the change of his outward Deportment, and the Neglect of his Dress. *Apollonius*, an

Clem. Alex.  
ii. Pædag.  
iii.

Acta. Mart.  
tyr. Nicom.  
ap. Bar. an  
293.

Clem. Alex.  
ii. Pædag.  
S. xi. xii.  
and iii. i. ii.  
iii. Const.  
Ap. i. c. iii.  
and v. c. ix.

Peri. Steph.  
Hymn. xiii.

ancient Ecclesiastical Author, Writing against the *Montanists*, and speaking of their pretended Prophets, thus reproves them. Tell me, saith he, doth a Prophet Dye his Hair? Doth he Paint his Eye-Brows? Doth he love gay Cloaths? Doth he play at Dice? Doth he lend upon Usury? Let them Speak. Are these things Justifiable? For I can prove that they Practise them. An Holy Martyr to prove by matter of Fact, that a certain Impostor, who took upon him the name of a Christian was no better than a Cheat; Represented to the Judges that this pretender Curled his Locks, Haunted the Barbers-Shops, looked too Affectingly upon the Women; Fed high, and smelt of Wine: Sufficient evidence that he could be no Christian. As for their whole outward Garb, and what Figure they made in the World; the Christians shewed themselves very indifferent and Incurious, at least very plain and Grave. Some of them quitted the common Habit, to take upon them that of the Philosophers, as *Tertullian* and *St. Heraclas*, the Disciple of *Origen*.

There were but few Divertisements, which they would allow themselves the use of. They were obliged to shun all the Publick Shews, whether of the *Theatre*, of the *Amphitheatre*, or of the *Circus*.

At

Ap. Euseb.  
v. Hist.  
xviii.

Act. St. Sebast.  
apud  
Baron. an.  
289. n. xvi.  
xvii.

Tertull. de  
Pall. Exerc.  
vi. Hist. xx.

At the *Theatre* were acted Tragedies and Comedies, on the *Amphitheatre* were seen the Combating of the *Gladiators*, and the Fighting with Wild-Beasts, the *Circus*, was for the Racing of Chariots. All these Spectacles with the Heathens, made part of the Worship of the false Gods; which had been of its self sufficient to have kept the Christians from coming near them. But they considered them also as a Poisonous Fountain of Debauchery and Dissoluteness, that tended only to the Corruption of Manners. The *Theatre* was a School of Immodesty, the *Amphitheatre* of Cruelty, and the Plays fomented all sort of Passions. Even those of the *Circus*, which appeared the most Innocent, were detested by all the Fathers because of the Factions that there Reigned, and the Quarrels and Animosities every Day created by them, which often ended in Bloody Frayes. In short, they could not but disapprove of the vast Expences thrown away upon these Spectacles, the Idleness they cherished, the Indiscriminate Herding together of Men and Women at these publick Entertainments, and the suspicious Consequences of so Promiscuous and familiar an Interview.

The Christians condemned also Dice, and other such like sedentary Plays, looking upon the loss of time as but one of the

F 3

least

Const. A  
post. ii. Lxii  
Tertull. de  
Spect.

August. vi.  
Confes. cap.  
vii.

Clem. iii.  
Paedag. ii.  
Cypr. de op.  
per et Clem.

Clem. Ped.  
iii. c. xi.

*Apollon. ap.* least of the Mischiefs that attend them.  
*Euseb. lib.* They censured intemperate Fits of Laugh-  
*v. c. xviii.* ter and every thing that tended to raise  
*Idem. ii.* them; as ridiculous Words or Actions,  
*Pædag. v.* merry Tales, Buffoonerys, foolish Jes-  
*vi. vii.* tings, fantastick Tricks and Gambols.  
*Ambros. i.* Much more did they Loath all kind of  
*Off. xxiii.* unseemly Words or Gestures, or such  
*Const. A-* which might favour of Immodesty. They  
*post. v. c. ix.* were for having a Christian maintain the  
*Eph. v. 4.* Dignity of his Character, and that there-  
*Scurrilitas.* fore he should take care in all his Behavi-  
*Col. iv. 6.* our, to discover nothing Indecent, Base  
 or Unbecoming an Ingenuous Person:  
 nor did they allow of those unfavoury Dis-  
 courses, and unprofitable Tattle to which  
 the meaner sort of People, and especially  
 the Female Sex, are so much addicted;  
 expressly condemned by St. *Paul*, when  
 he directs that our Speech should be al-  
 ways seasoned with the salt of Grace.  
 'Twas to cut off these Excesses of the  
 Tongue that silence was so highly recom-  
 mended to Christians.

This Discipline would appear now a  
 Days very Severe. Yet why should it?  
 If we consider how expressly Scoffers and  
 Scorners are condemned in the Scriptures,  
 and the theatning Denounced against  
 them; and how Grave and Serious was the  
 Life of Jesus Christ and his Disciples. Be-  
 sides, the tasting pleasure in the things I  
 have

have mentioned is Vicious, or at least  
 Dangerous; and a Christian even in the  
 most Innocent matters ought to Regulate  
 himself with the greatest Sobriety and  
 Moderation. Indeed the whole Life of  
 a Christian should be taken up in little else,  
 than in expiating his past Sins by Repen-  
 tance, and in Guarding himself against  
 the like for the future by the Mortifica-  
 tion of his Passions. The true penitent  
 to Chastise himself for having Abused  
 the Pleasures, of sence, must begin by  
 denying himself even the Lawful use of  
 them, and to extinguish, or at least weak-  
 en natural Concupiscence, must (as much  
 as is possible) deny all its Cravings.  
 So that a true Christian must never make  
 it his business to seek the pleasures of  
 Sence, but just take so much of them as  
 the necessities of Life require, and which  
 cannot be withheld; as Eating, Drink-  
 ing, and necessary Repose; if ever he  
 take any Recreation, it must be a Recre-  
 ation properly so called, that is to say a  
 Refreshment and Ease, to Recreate or  
 relieve the weakness of Nature, which  
 would sink under the weight were the  
 Body always kept up to hard Labours,  
 or the Mind always bent upon close  
 Thinking. But to seek Pleasure for Plea-  
 sures Sake, and as making it our end:  
 Nothing can be more contrary to the O-  
 bligation

bligation we lye under of Renouncing our selves, which is the very Life and Soul of all Christian Vertues.

This Serious and mortified Disposition of the true Christians appears even from the Genius of the Heresies of these first times, which for the most part were occasioned by an excess of Discipline and corporal Austerity. The *Marcionites*, and after them the *Manichees*, held that the Flesh was an Evil thing, as being the work of the evil Principle, and therefore concluded that it was not lawful either to eat Flesh, or to multiply it by Procreation, and that the Resurrection of the Flesh, was a thing neither to be expected nor desired. This contempt of the Body, this Abstinence and Continence made a very specious Appearance. The *Montanists* added many other Fasts as of necessary Obligation to those appointed by the Church; condemned second Marriages, and wholly disallowed of Penance, as not granting that the Church had Power to restore them who had, after their Baptism fallen into the commission of any grievous Sin. He that should now a Days advance Errors of this Nature would scarce gain many Profelytes.

But how severe soever the Life of those Primitive Christians may appear to have been; yet we are not to imagine it was  
sad

sad and Melancholy. St. Paul required no impossible thing of them, when he bid them rejoyce; if they denied themselves those Excesses of Pleasure which other Men hunt after, they were freed also from all that Chagrin and other Passions which are so very troublesom; leading a Life free from Ambition, from Covetousness, and all Fond doating upon the things of this Life. They enjoyed the Peace of a good Conscience, the Reflexions of a well spent Life; and the assurance thereupon following of their being in the Favour of God; and above all, the blessed hopes of the Life to come, which they always looked upon as near at Hand: For they knew that this World must suddenly pass away; and the Persecutions seemed to be but forerunners of the universal Judgment.

So that they little troubled their Thoughts about what would become of their Families after their Death: If they left their Children Orphans, as was often the Case of the Martyrs, they knew that the Church would be their Mother, and that they should want for nothing. They lived for the most part only from Hand to Mouth, upon their Labour, or upon their Estates, which they divided among the Poor, without distraction of Thought, without the hurry of Business; standing  
off

Phil. iii. 1.  
E iv. iv.

off not only from all sordid Methods of Gain, or whatsoever might bear the least suspicion of injustice, but also from the very desire of heaping up Treasures and enriching themselves; so that the Prelates complain of it as a great disorder, and a new thing among Christians, that in the intervals of the Persecutions, they began to forget themselves, and fell to getting Estates; as if they were for establishing to themselves Mansions upon Earth. And they that stood thus indifferent to Earthly Possessions, could have no great hankering after sensual Pleasures: and if in these things we do not at least in the sincerity of our Desires emulate them, we are no good Christians.

Cyp. de  
Laps.



XI. WITH all this indifferency to the things of this Life; yet the Christians generally made choice of the Married State: They could have no good opinion of the Celibacy of the Heathens; since they saw it founded only upon Licentiousness and Debauchery. So that the Civil Laws themselves aimed at the restraint of it, both by affixing some kind of Penalties upon those who continued unmarried after such a Term of Years; and rewards to those who in lawful Matrimony encreased the number of the People. The Christians knew but two states; that of

Tac. An. iii.  
v tit. cod. de  
infirm. pen.  
cælib.

v. Baron.  
an. 57. n.  
44, &c.

of Marriage, or Continence. They preferred the latter, as knowing its Excellencies, and they often found the means of Reconciling them both in one; for there were many Married Persons who yet lived in Continence. But all Christians in general abstained from the use of the Bed on the Feasts and Fasts of the Church, as well as at other times, when (according to the Apostles Rule) they were disposed more Freely to give themselves to Prayer: Second Marriages were looked upon as a weakness; inso-much as in some Churches they enjoined the Persons so remarrying, Penance.

Tertul. ad  
uxor. c. vi.  
& de Resur.  
car. c. 8.

Cyp. de  
sing. Cle.

Cor. vii.

Hier. ad  
Salvin in  
fi.

But how highly soever they esteemed Continence, they had an esteem for Marriage, as being a great Sacrament: They had honourable Thoughts of it, considering it as an Emblem of that Union which is between Christ and his Church, and that Blessing Pronounced by God upon Mankind at the first Creation; which neither Original Sin nor the Deluge hath taken away; that is, of encreasing and multiplying. They knew that the relation of Father and Mother was an high and honourable Character; as being the Images of God in a more peculiar manner, and Co-operating with him in the Production of Men. 'Tis certain by the Gospel, that St. Peter was a Married Man;

Orat. in  
Bened.  
Spons.

Clem. Alex.  
ii. Pædag.  
c. x.

*Clem. iii. Strom.* Man; and Tradition, (as *St. Clemens Alexandrinus* relates it) tells the same of the Apostle *St. Philip*, that they had both of them Children; and particularly of *St. Philip*, 'tis observed that he gave his Daughters in Marriage.

*Const. Ap. iv. c. x.* Among other Directions, for the Education of Children, this is one, That they should (to secure their Vertue) timely dispose of them in Marriage; and they who had Charity enough to take upon them the charge of breeding up Orphans, were advised to Match them as soon as they came of Age; and rather to their own Children than to Strangers: a Proof, how little the Christians of those days regarded Worldly Interest in the matter of Marriage. They advised with their Bishop about Marriages (as indeed they did about all Affairs of greater Importance) that so, saith *Ignatius*, they might be made according to God, and not according to Concupiscence. When the Parties were agreed, the Marriage was publickly and solemnly performed in the Church, and there Consecrated by the Benediction of the Pastor, and Confirmed by the Oblation of the holy Sacrifice. The Bridegroom gave his Hand to the Bride, and the Bride received from her Husband a Ring engraved with the Sign of the Cross, or at least having on it some Symbolical Figure

figure representing some Christian Vertue; as a Dove, an Anchor, or a Fish, for of such Figures did the Christians make their Seals; and among the Antients their Rings were also their Seals or Signets.

XII  
The Union of Christians.

HITHERTO have we considered Christians in their Private Capacities; let us now take a view of them as United into a Body and making a Church. The name of *Ecclesia*, i. e. Church, signifies no more than an Assembly, and was taken in the Cities of Greece for a meeting of the People, who commonly came together in the Theatre, for the dispatch of Publick Affairs. We have in the Acts of the Apostles an Example of this profane *Ecclesia* or Assembly in the City of *Ephesus*; and therefore the Christians by way of distinction from these profane *Ecclesias*, where called the *Ecclesia* or Church of God. *Origen* in his Dispute against *Celsus*, compares these two sorts of Assemblies together, and lays it down as a thing certain and manifest, that the less Zeal of the Christians (who were but few in comparison of the rest) did so much excel other Men, That the Christian Assemblies appeared in the World like Stars in the Firmament. The Christians therefore of every City made up but one Body; and this was one principal pretence of

Per-



Persecuting them. Their Assemblies were represented as Illegal Meetings, not being Authorized by the Laws of the State. Their Unity and Love passed for a Crime, and was Objected against them as a dangerous Confederacy.

And indeed all the Christians living in the same Place were well known to each other; as it could not be otherwise, considering how often they joined in Prayer, and other exercises of Religion, upon which occasions they met together almost every Day. They all maintained a Friendly Correspondence among themselves; often met and conferred together, and even in indifferent matters conformed to one another. Their Joys and their Grievs were in common: If any one had received of God any particular Blessing, they all shared the satisfaction. If any one were under Penance, they all Interceded on his behalf, and begged that Mercy might be shewn him. They lived together as kindred of the same Family, calling one another by the Name of Father or Child, Brother or Sister, according to the difference of Age or Sex.

This Unity was maintained by that Authority which every Master of a Family had over those of his own House; and by the Submission that all of them paid to the Priests

Priests and their Bishops; a Duty so earnestly recommended to Christians in the Epistles of the holy Martyr St. Ignatius: But above all, the Bishops were most closely United among themselves. They all knew one another, at least by their Names and Characters, and held a constant Epistolary Correspondence; which was easy to be done at that time, by reason of the vast extent of the Roman Empire; which God in his Providence seems to have so ordered, as it were on purpose for the Propagation of the Gospel. But as the Church was extended far wider than the Empire, reaching to all the Nations round about it; that uniformity of Faith and Manners, which was found among all the Christians was still the more wonderful, considering the Diversity of Nations among whom they were scattered. And herein appeared the Power of true Religion, Correcting in all that embraced it, all those Barbarous and unreasonable Customs in which they had been educated: In short, the universal Church was in reality but one Body, all the Members whereof were United to each other; not only by the same Faith, but also by the same most Comprehensive Charity.

*Bardeſan.  
apud Euseb.  
vi. Prepar.  
c. 8.*

*Euseb. i.  
Prep. c. iv.*

EVERY

XIII.

Their Church Assembly's Liturgy, and outward form of Worship.

*Justin. ii. Apol. in fi.*

*AB. xx. 7. Ec.*

*v. Baron. an lvi. n. xcix.*

*Idem. an. ccxxiv. n. iii. an. 245 n. 302. Euseb. viii. Hist. c. iii.*

EVERY Particular Church met together on the Lord's-Day, which the Heathens called *Sunday*, and which the Christians honoured above all Days, in the Memory of the Creation of Light, and of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The place of their Assembly, was generally some private House, where they chose for this purpose one of the dining Rooms, which the *Latins* called *Canacula*, and which were the upper Chambers of the House; such was that upper Room from whence fell the young Man *Eutychus* whom *St. Paul* recovered to Life, which we find was three Stories high, enlightened with many Lamps, where the Faithful were met together on the Night of the Lord's-Day for the Breaking of Bread; that is, for the Celebration of the Mysteries which was followed with a repast, *viz.* the Love-Feast. In the Persecutions they were often forced to hide themselves in the Cryptæ or Hollow places under Ground, without the Cities; like the Catacombs still to be seen at *Rome*. When they had more Liberty, they met in Publick Places, known by all to be the Churches of Christians. We see Examples thereof in the reigns of the Emperors *Alexander* and *Gordianus*. The Emperor *Gallienus* causing a stop to be put to the Persecutions, gave order that the Christians

Christians should have their *Cemiteries* restored to them; near which commonly stood their Churches; and when *Paulus Samoſatenus* was deposed, the Emperor *Aurelian* commanded the Church, *viz.* the *Ibid 30.* Material Church of the place, to be restored to those who continued in Communion with the Bishop of *Rome*. Some of these publick Churches had been before Private Houses; as that of the Senator *St. Pudens*, the happy Father of so many blessed Children, *St. Novatus* and *St. Timotheus* the Priest, and the Virgins *St. Pudenciana* and *St. Praxedæ*. *Martyr. Rom. xx. Jun.* This illustrious Family had been instructed in the Faith by the Apostles themselves; and their House was turned into a Church by the Priest *St. Pastor*. There were often also new Buildings erected on purpose for this use: A little before the *Dioclesian* Persecution, they had in all Cities Churches new built from the Ground; so mightily was the number of the Faithful encreased; and the Persecution began by the pulling down these Churches. *Euseb. viii. Hist. c. iii.*

In these Assemblies they said their Prayers before mentioned, at the stated Hours of the Day and Night: But the chief work of their meeting together was to offer the Sacrifice, which could not be done without a Priest. They called it either by the Scripture names of the Supper,

*Domini-  
cium. Col-  
lecta.  
Cypr. Ep.  
lxiii ad Cæ-  
cil.*

per, the breaking of Bread, the Oblation; or by the names afterward received in the Church, as the *Synaxis*; that is to say, Assembly, in Latin *Collecta*: the *Eucharist*; that is, Thanksgiving; the *Liturgy*; that is, the Publick Service. In the time of the Persecutions, for fear of meeting with disturbance from the Infidels, they sometimes administred it before Day. There was but one Sacrifice in each Church; that is, in each Diocess: 'Twas the Bishop that Offered it; nor did the Priests do it, but in case of the absence or Indisposition of the Bishop. But they assisted him in performing the Service, and all of them Offered together with him. The Order of the Liturgy hath been changed according to the difference of Times and Places: Some Indifferent Ceremonies have been added to it, and some others retrenched; but the Essentials have remained always the same. The Account we find of it in the first Times, is this;

*St. Just. ii.  
Apol. in fi.* After some Prayers, followed the reading of the Holy Scriptures, first out of the Old Testament, and then out of the New. They always concluded with a Lesson out of the Gospel, which when Read the Bishop Expounded, adding thereto some proper Exhortation suited to the occasions of his Flock. That ended, they

all

all rose up, and turning their Faces to the East, with hands lift up to Heaven, they Prayed for all sorts and Conditions of Men, for Christians and Infidels, great and small; particularly for all that were any ways afflicted or distressed in Mind, Body, or Estate. A Deacon called upon them to Pray, a Priest pronounced the Words of Prayer, and the People gave their Assent by answering, Amen. Then the Gifts were offered, that is the Bread and Wine, mingled with Water, which was to be the matter of the Sacrifice. The People gave the Kiss of Peace, Men to Men, and Women to Women in token of their perfect Unity. After that every one gave his Offerings to the Priest, and he in the name of them all offered them up to God. Then he began the solemnity of the Sacrifice, calling upon the People to lift up their Hearts to God, and with the Angels and all the Heavenly powers to Laud and Magnifie his glorious Name; next he proceeded to repeat the History of the Institution, and pronouncing the Words of our Saviour, he made the Consecration; after that together with the People he rehearsed the Lords-Prayer, and having himself received the Communion, he gave it the Deacons for the rest of the Congregation. For Regularly all those that entered the

*Cypr. Ep.  
lxiii.*

*Cypr. de  
Orat.*

*St. Just.*

*Can. Apost. ix. 10.* Church were to Communicate, especially all that Ministred at the Altar.

*Tertull. i. ad uxer. c. v.*

As for those who had not the opportunity of assisting at the Sacrifice in Person, the Eucharist was sent to them by the Hands of Deacons or the *Acolythi*. They reserved part of it also to be always in readiness for the Viaticum for Dying Persons, as a provision for their Journey. They permitted the Faithful to carry it Home; to take it every morning before they touched any other Food, or upon sudden occasions in case of Danger; as when they should be called to suffer Martyrdom. These things were admitted in those Days. For they had not then the liberty of meeting together and celebrating the Mysteries when they pleased. That which was thus carryed abroad was onely the Bread. Though in their publick Assemblies all in General communicated under both kinds, excepting little Children, to whom was given onely the Wine. The *Agapa* or Love-Feast, which in these first times followed the Communion, was a Repast of ordinary Food, which they took altogether in the same place, where they had Communicated. In after times it was given only to the Widows and the Poor. There was always set aside a Portion for the Pastor though Absent. The Priests and

*Const. Apost. ii. c. xxviii.*

Dea-

Deacons had a double Portion. Every one also of the Readers, Singers, and Door-Keepers had their share of it.

'T W A S in these same Assemblies that (as far as was possible) they Administred the other Sacraments, which was the cause of the special care they took not to admit any Infidel. For they inviolably observed that command of our Saviour, of not giving Holy things to Dogs, or casting Pearl before Swine. This is the reason why they called Sacraments by the name of Mysteries, that is to say things Concealed, and that they kept them to themselves with a sacred secrecy. They kept them concealed not only from the Infidels, but from the *Catechumens* also. They not only declined to Celebrate the Mysteries before them, but would not so much as inform them what was done at the Celebration, nor pronounce in their presence the solemn words, nor Speak a syllable in their Hearing concerning the nature of the Sacraments. Much less did they Write upon this Subject. And if in their publick Discourse, or in any Writing which might fall into profane Hands, they were obliged to Speak of the Eucharist, or of any other Mytery, they did it in obscure and *Ænigmatical* Terms. So in the New Testament to

XIV. The secret of the Mysteries.

*Mat. vii. 6. v. Methode des peres. ch. viii.*

*AR. ii. 42. 46. AR. xx. 7. 11.*

G 3

break

break Bread, signifies to consecrate and distribute the Eucharist, a Phrase by which the Infidels could not guess what was meant. This Discipline of the Church Continued for many Ages after the Persecutions ceased.

'Twas not strange to the Heathens to see Mysteries in Religion: They themselves observed the like in their Profane Ceremonies. They who were Initiated into the Mysteries of *Isis*, or *Osiris*, or *Ceres Eleusinia*, or *Cybele*, or the *Samothracian* Gods, or other such like, were bound under the most dreadful Maledictions to conceal the secret of the Mysteries; and he that should have divulged them, would have been looked upon as a most accursed Wretch. Hereof *Apuleius* gives us a lively Instance; and tis upon this account that *Herodotus* as he is speaking of the divers ceremonies of the Religion of the *Egyptians*, or other People, often adds: I know the reason of these things, but I dare not tell it.

*Apul. Asin.*  
*lib. xi.*

XV.

Y E T this secret of the Mysteries gave The rea-  
sons of the  
general O-  
dium a-  
gainst the  
Christians.  
accasion to many false and scandalous Reports against the Christians. For Men generally conceal themselves rather for Hurt than Good. And 'twas a thing but too Notorious, that in other Religions, the Mysteries which they took such care to

to Conceal were indeed no better than a Cover for the most infamous Practises; as in the ceremonies of *Ceres* and *Cybele*, and in the Sacrifices of *Bacchus*, which were forbidden at *Rome*, by a Decree of the Senate A. V. C. 568. in which were Perpetrated most horrid Cruelties. The Prejudice they had against the Christians made them readily Imagin, that what they kept so secret, was something of the like Nature. And these suspicions were supported by the destable Villanies committed in their Conventicles by the *Gnosticks*, the *Carpocratians*, and other Hereticks, which indeed were such that one would scarce beleive the account the Fathers give us of them. Now all these Hereticks went under the Common Denomination of Christians, Besides, from among the Catholicks themselves, there were always some Apostates who Revolted to Paganism; either out of levity of Mind, or refusing to submit to Pennance after the Commission of some grievous Sin, or as not being able to bear Persecution. These Apostates in their own Defence, Invented *Calumnies* against the Christians, or at least confirmed and heightened those that were already forged against them: And having been themselves Initiated in the Mysteries of the

*Orig. in*  
*Cels. i. Ter-*  
*tull. Apol.*  
*vii.*

*Liv. lix. c*  
*9.*

*Castor. ap.*  
*Euseb. iv.*  
*Hist. c. vii.*  
*Bar. an.*  
*cxx. n. 22.*  
*&c.*

*Epiph.*  
*Hares. xx.*  
*and xxvii.*  
*Iren. lib.*  
*i. c. xxiv.*

Christians their Testimony passed for Undoubted.

Thus came to be spread that Lye, that the Christians in the Night assemblies, cut the Throat of a young Child to dip their Bread in his Blood, and after that Roasted him, covered him over with Flower and so fed upon his Flesh: Which false Report plainly arose from the Mysteries of the Eucharist Misrepresented: To this they Farther added, that after having taken together their common Repast, in which they eat and drank to Excess, they cast a bit of Meat to a Dog who was tyed to a Candlestick, so that the Dog leaping at the Bait threw down the Candle, after which being now in the Dark all the Men and Women were Promiscuously together, like so many Beasts without any choice or Distinction as it happened. How absurd soever these Fables were, yet the People believed them, and the Christian Apologists, were obliged to bestow a serious Answer upon them. The Example of the *Bacchanals*\* in Rome about two Hundred Years before, in which were Discovered such horrid Villanies, had taught them to believe in general that there could be nothing so Abominable that might not be Introduced under the colour of Religion.

The

The Christians were also charged with being Enemies to all Mankind, and to the *Roman* Power in particular. That they rejoiced at the disasters of the Publick; were grieved at its Successes, and wished the ruin of the Empire. That which gave occasion to all those Surmises was, That they heard the Christians talk so much of the Vanity of all Earthly Glories, of the end of the World, and of the last Judgment; or perhaps they were somewhat Allarmed from what some indiscreet or malicious Persons might have told them, concerning the Punishments denounced in the *Apocalyps*, against Idolatrous Rome, and the Vengeance which God would one Day take on her for the Blood of the Martyrs, which she had spilt. That which further encreased these Suspicions against the Christians, was their not joining with their Neighbours in their Publick Rejoyings, which consisted in Sacrifices, Profane Feasts, and Spectacles full of Idolatry and Dissoluteness. On the contrary, they rather chose to pass those Days in Penance and Mortification, in consideration of the numberless Sins and Provocations then committed against God, and they rejoiced on those Days which the Superstition of the Pagans had marked for Calamitous and unfortunate. They avoided their

*Luc. in Philopat.*

*Terent. Ap. c. xxxv.*

*Const. Ap.*

*v. c. 9.*

*Clem. ii.*

*Pedag.*

*Ambros.*

*Serm. xvii.*

*de Cal. Jan.*

*Aug. in*

*Pf. xcvi.*

*n. v.*

*Min. Fel.*

*Ter. B. A.*

*pol. c. vii.*

*8. 9.*

*Orig.*

*Contr. Cels.*

*vi. p. 293.*



Const. Ap.  
ii. c. xxvi.

their Fairs because of the profane Plays there Acted. If ever they went to them, it was only just to provide themselves necessaries, or to buy some Slave, in order to convert him.

And indeed this one thing was sufficient to render them odious to the People, their openly declaring against all the established Religions. 'Twas to no purpose to tell them that they worshiped the only true God, maker of Heaven and Earth, and that they worshiped him in Spirit, daily offering up to him the Sacrifices of their Prayers. This was a sort of Language these blind Idolaters knew not what to make of. They demanded of the Christians to tell them the name of their God; and called them down-right Atheists, because they Worshiped none of the Gods that stood in their Temples: had no burning Altars, nor Bloody Sacrifices. The Sacrificing Priests, the Augurs, the Aruspices, the Diviners of all sorts; in a Word, all those whose Employment and dependance was upon the Idolatrous worship, spared not to foment, and blow up the Rage of the People against them: To that purpose they made use of pretended Prodigies, accusing the Christians as the Causes of all the Publick Calamities that beset them; when they were plagued with Famine, Pestilence

tilence, War, or the like; all was charged upon the score of the Christians, by means of whom, said they, the Wrath of the Gods is drawn down upon places where they are suffered to live. *Tertul. Ap. xl. Arnob. init.*

These violent Prejudices against the Christians, made them fly in the Face of their very Vertues, and turn them to their reproach. The Love they bore to one another was scandalously Interpreted; the common Appellation used amongst themselves of Brother and Sister, were wrested to an ill sense; as indeed the Heathens had abused those Names in their infamous Amours. The large Alms they distributed were Censured to be done with an evil Design, to seduce the Poorer sort of People, and strengthen their Faction; or as a contrivance of the coverous Bishops to draw into their Churches vast heaps of Treasure to lye at their disposal. As for Miracles, they said, they were only pieces of Sorcery and Magical Impostures: And indeed the World was then over run with cheating Quacks, Jugglers and Fortune Tellers, who had their several ways of Divination, by which they pretended to foretell things to come; and by Vertue of their Spells and Charms, by the Power of some Barbarous and unintelligible Words, and Fantastick Figures and Characters, to be able to cure Diseases. And whether it

*Tertul. Ap. c. xxxix. Petro.*

*Acta S. S. Hippolyti. Sc. apud Baron. an. 259. n. xiii.*

*Prud. hymn S. Laurent.*

it were all done by trick, or whether they were really assisted by some evil Spirit; they imposed upon the Eye sight, and did actually perform many strange Feats, to the Amazement of the Beholders; so that 'twas no new thing to hear talk of Miracles; nay, nor to see them. They confounded the true with the false, and equally despised all pretenders to them. And the Country out of which the Apostles and first Christians came, encreased this contempt of them. For the greatest part of these kind of Imposters came out of the East.

The Persecutions themselves were a sufficient Ground of hatred against the Christians; People supposed them Criminals, because they were every where treated as such, and judged of the greatness of their Crime by the severity of their Punishment. Thus they were looked upon as an accursed Race of Mortals, devoted to destruction, and marked out for Flames and Gibbers. And to add contumely to Injustice, they branded them with ill Names. And these are those mighty things which rendered the Christians so odious to the ignorant and unthinking Multitude. Upon these wild and general Notions, *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*, following common Fame, found all they say concerning the Christians.

The

*Tertul. Ap.*  
c. 1. *Baron*  
an. cxxxviii  
an. v.  
v. *Bar.*  
ccclxxxv.  
p. v.

The Emperor *Claudius* (saith *Suetonius*) banished the Jews from Rome; who at the Instigation of *Chrestus*, were always making disturbances; as if Jesus Christ had been then living, and the Head of a party among the Jews. The same Author reckons among the good Actions of *Nero* his having caused the Christians to be brought to Punishment, *A Sect*, saith he, of a new and dangerous Superstition. *Tacitus* speaking of *Nero's* having fired Rome only to divert himself with the sight, saith that he charged it upon those who were commonly called Christians, a sort of People who were generally hated for their Practices. After which he adds, They took their Name from a certain Person called Christ, who in the reign of *Tiberius Cæsar*, was put to Death by *Pontius Pilate*. But this Pernicious Superstition, after having suffered some little check, brake forth a new, and spread it self not only throughout all Judea, where it took Birth; but also to Rome its self, the place where every thing that is black and infamous seems to Center and Rendezvous: First, there were some seized who confessed, and upon their discovery vast numbers were Condemned, not so much upon the account of the Fire, as being a Sacrifice to the common Odium. He treats them afterward as a Mischievous sort of People, and such as well deserved the most Exemplary Punishments. Even

*Judaos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Romæ expulsi.*

*Suet. Ner. n. 16. Affecti supplicii Christiani. Genus hominum Superstitionis nova & malefica.*

*Tac. xv. annal. quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat.*

*Repressaque in praesens exstirpabili Superstitione, &c.*

*Quo omnia undique atrocia & pudenda confluunt celebranturque.*

Even the Men of Learning and Ingenuity among them, that would Vouchsafe to enter into any examination of the matter, were not without their averfions againſt the Chriſtians. Thoſe perſons of Learning were either *Greeks* or *Romans*, who uſed to diſpiſe other Nations under the notion of Barbarians, and above all People the *Jews*; a Nation that had for a long time made but a Deſpicable Appearance in the World, and ſtood particularly Branded for a People of a ridiculous Superſtition and ſottiſh Credulity.

*Credat Judeus Apellata, non ego.*  
*Hor. i. Sat.*  
v.

*AB. xxv.*  
19.

*Act. xxviii.*  
22.

*This may a Jew believe, not I; ſaith Horace* ſpeaking of a Prodigy. When therefore they were told that there were ſome *Jews* who adored as the Son of God, a Perſon that had been publicly put to Death upon the Croſs, and that the grand Controverſy between them and the other *Jews* was, whether this Perſon was yet Living after his Death, and whether he were the true King of the *Jews*; one may readily imagin how Ridiculous theſe Diſputes would appear to the Heathens. They ſaw that thoſe of this new Sect were hated and Perſecuted by all the other *Jews*, ſo that it often proved an occaſion of great Commotions among them, and therefore they concluded that theſe were a worſe ſort of *Jews* than all the reſt.

They

They further Objected, that thoſe of this new Religion uſed neither arguments nor Eloquence to convince Mens Underſtanding, but barely bad them Believe what was told them without diſputing it, pretending Miracles for all they ſaid. That the Greateſt part of them were poor ignorant Souls, that never looked into any Books, but the Writings of the *Jews*. That they ſet up for Teachers and Inſtructers, but 'twas only of People Simple and Ignorant like themſelves, as Women and little People; finding them more forward to receive their Doctrine, than Perſons of Senſe and Learning. And indeed this was a thing altogether new to them. For there was no Proviſion made by the Heathens for the Inſtruction of the common People in matters of Religion. They had only the Lectures of their Philoſophers, who Read to them the precepts of Morality, but never meddled with the proper Offices of Religion. Beſides, as all the Hereticks paſſed under the name of Chriſtians, they aſcribed to the whole Body of Chriſtians all the Wild Fancies of the *Valentinians* and the other ſuch like Viſionaries encountered by *Irenæus*. The Heathens confounded all theſe Extravagancies with the Catholick Faith; ſo that the Religion of the Chriſtians appeared to them a meer meſs of Inſatiable

*Orig. Com.*  
*Cels.*

*Aug. de vera Rel. init.*

*Orig. Contr.*  
*Cels.*

*V. Baron.*  
*an. clxxix.*  
*n. 17. and*

tions, 28

tions, vented by a parcel of Ignorant Crack-Brain'd Fools.

Euseb. Præ-  
par. i. cap.  
ii.

For what reason, said they, can you give us why we should quit the established Religions, Pleading so long a Prescription of Time, recommended with such a pomp of Ceremonies, confirmed by the Authority of so many Kings and Legislators, and received by the Consent of all People, both *Greeks* and *Barbarians*; and that to embrace a Novel Invention of we know not who, and run our selves a ground upon the *Jewish* Fables: Or if you have a mind to turn *Jews*, why are you not *Jews* thorow out? But your Extravagancy is unaccountable in Worshipping the God of the *Jews* whether they will or no, and in Worshipping him in such a manner as the *Jews* themselves Condemn as much as we, and in pretending to their Law with which you have nothing to do.

'Tis true the Morals of Christians were very Exact, and their Practises answered their Principles. But all the World was then full of Philosophers, who pretended no less than the Christians both to the teaching of Vertue, and to the Practising of it. There were among them also many who in the first Ages of the Church, (perhaps in Imitation of the Christians) ran about the World from Place to Place preten-

pretending to make it their business to reform Mankind, and thereupon submitting themselves to many Hardships, and undergoing a kind of Persecution by the ill Treatment they sometimes met with, as *Apollonius Tyaneus Musonius, V. Baron*  
*Damis, Epictetus*, and some others. The *an. lxxv. n.*  
Philosophers had for many Ages before 6.  
been in great Reputation. 'Twas taken *Orig. Cons.*  
for granted that nothing more could be *Cels.*  
added to what had already been said by some of them. They could not imagin that *Barbarians* should have any thing better to offer than *Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, or Zeno*. They concluded that if these new Pretenders had any thing that was good in them, 'twas but somewhat which they had borrowed from those Old Sages.

Besides, the Philosophers were a more Agreeable sort of Professors, and their Principles better Accommodated to the inclinations of Mankind, than those of the Christians. The greatest part of them did not condemn Pleasure, nay some of them made Pleasure the Sovereign good. They left every one to enjoy his own Opinion, and take his own way of Living. If they could not perswade Men, their method was to rally and dispise them; and that was all the trouble they gave them. But above all they took care not

to pick Quarrels with the established Religions. Some believed them, and gave Mystical Explications of the most Ridiculous Fables. Others troubled their Heads no farther about matters of Religion, then to Acknowledge some first being, the Author of Nature, leaving the publick Superstitions to those whom they believed incapable of higher attainments. Even the *Epicureans*, who of all others discovered themselves the most Openly against the popular opinions concerning the Gods, yet freely Assisted at the Sacrifices, and in what part of the World So ever they were, joyned with the rest in the outward Forms of Religious Worship there Practised. In this all their Wise Men agreed, not to oppose the Customes established either by the Laws of the Countrey or Prescription of Time.

Assistio Divinis Honorat.

Their Belief of a Plurality of Gods went so far that they imagined every Nation, every City, every Family had Gods of its own, who took a more peculiar care of them, and whom therefore they were to Worship after a more peculiar Manner. So that they counted all Religions good in such Places where they had been of a long time Received. But the Superstitious Women among them, and other Weak and Ignorant People were always hunting after new Religions,

im-

imagining that the more Gods and Goddesses they worshipped, and the greater number and varietie of Ceremonies they observed, the more Devout and Religious they were. The Wise Men among them and their Politicians did what they could to Restrain this restless Humour and keep it within some Bounds; and therefore were against all Innovations in matters of this Nature. Above all they Forbad all strange and Forreign Religions; and this the *Romans* made a Fundamental Principle of their Politicks. To perswade their People to believe that 'twas to the Beneficence of their Titular Deitys that *Rome* was beholding for all its Glorious Successes, and the Grandeur of its Empire. That their Gods must needs have been more Puissant Deitys than any of the rest, since they had brought under their Subjection all the Nations of the World. Thus when the Christian Religion was entirely established, the *Pagans* failed not to Impute to this Change of Religion, the Fall of the Empire which Succeeded soon upon it. And to answer these False Suggestions, was St. *Augustin* obliged to compose his large Treatise entituled *De Civitate Dei*.

Liv. xxix.

The Contempt the Christians had of Death, was not by the Heathens looked

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upon



upon as any great matter. They saw every Day their voluntier Gladiators, who for some inconsiderable Reward, or perhaps for just nothing at all but to shew their own Bravery, fearlessly exposed themselves to the Swords of their Antagonists, and ventured having their Throats Cut in the open *Amphitheatre*. They had Dayly examples before them of Persons (and those of the best sort) who upon any little Disgust would fairly Dispatch themselves out of the World. Some of their Philosophers (as the *Lawyers* report of them) did the like purely out of Vanity, of which *Lucian's Peregrinus* is a famous Instance. And therefore seeing the Christians Professing a Renunciation of the Enjoyments of this Life, and placing all their happiness in that to come; they rather wondered that they did not kill themselves. They tell us, Saith St. *Justin*,

*Go then kill your selves without any more ado, get you gone to your God, and let us hear no more of you. And Antoninus, Pro-Consul of Asia, seeing the Christians Crowding the Court, and offering themselves to Martyrdom, cried out to them, Ah! Wretched Creatures as you are; if you are so fond of dying, can you not find Ropes to hang your selves, or Precipices from whence you may break your Necks.*

Thus

Thus all the World were set against the Christians; the People and the Magistrates, the Ignorant and the Wise. By the one they were abhorred as Impostors and abominable Impious Wretches; by the other they were despised as a company of Man haters, Visionary, Foolish and Melancholick People. Intoxicated with an unaccountable Frenzy of throwing away their Lives for nothing: So Odious and Despicable were they in the sight of the World, that scarce any one would vouchsafe so much as to change a Word with them; such was the Prejudice all Men had conceived against the Christians, that the very Name of Christians was sufficient for their Condemnation, and destroyed whatsoever else of good was found to be in them. Such a one (was their common saying) is an Honest Man, were it not for the misfortune of his being a Christian.

*Bonus est C. Sicut tantum quod Christianus. Tertul. Ap. c. iii.*

XVI. The Persecutions. the manner of proceeding against them. Their Punishments.

THAT the Christians being so universally hated, should be Persecuted is not strange, but this one may justly wonder at, That the Romans, who in their Laws and Government, and in their other Conduct gave such Proofs of their Wisdom and Equity, should practice against their fellow Romans; or indeed against any human Creatures, such cruelties as we read of in the History of the Martyrs: That

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the



the Judges should cause the Person accused to be put to the Torment in their own Presence, in open Court, in the view of the whole World; that they should employ such different sorts of Tortures upon them, and that (as for all that appears) meerly Arbitrary. It may be worth our while therefore, to observe in all this, what was owing to the standing Customs and Constitutions of their Government: and what was superadded thereto by a false Zeal for Religion, and Reasons of State.

The *Romans* tried all Causes in open Court; all their Processes as well Criminal as Civil, the Charge as well as the Sentence was given in some publick place, where under a covered Gallery the Magistrate seated himself in his Tribunal, raised on high above the rest of the People, and surrounded with the Officers of the Court; the Lictors with Axes and Bundles of Rods in their Hands attending him, and the Soldiers standing by, always in a readiness to execute his Orders: For the *Roman* Magistrates had in their own Hands the Power of the Sword, as well as the Administration of Justice. The Penalties for every Crime were fixed by the Laws; but so as to vary according to the Quality of the Offenders; and always more rigorous against Slaves than against

*Cic. iv. Ver.  
i. l. c. xl.*

*L. 6. § 2.  
F. de pen.  
l. 9 §. 11.  
l. x. l. xxviii.  
Ec. ibid.*

against Freeman; against Foreigners than against the *Roman* Citizens: Therefore *St Paul* was Beheaded, as being a Denizen of *Rome*, and *St. Peter* Crucified as a Jew. The Cross was the most infamous of all their Punishments; and they that suffered that Death, were generally first beaten with Rods, and had their sides burned with red hot Irons, or flaming Torches, before they were nailed to the Cross; their putting to the Rack was done in Publick, and the manner of it was extremely Cruel; but it was seldom exercised upon any save Slaves or Persons of the lowest consideration. The Martyrology observes it as a thing Extraordinary, that *St. Marinus* being one of the Senatorian Order, was put upon the *Eculeus* and Tormented with the *Ungula Ferrea*, or Iron Pincers, with which they pinched or burnt the sides of Malefactors upon the Rack. And yet 'twas after this way of Proceeding that most of the Martyrs were Tormented. The *Roman* Laws as well as ours of *France*, permitted none to be put to the Rack, save only for Examination sake. But they used the same means to make Christians deny their pretended Crimes, as they did to make others confess their real ones. The same manner of trying Criminals by putting them to the Rack, of stretching out their Limbs

*Cic. ver. ult.  
n. lxxiii.*

*Martyrol.  
Rom. xii.  
Janu.*

with Pullies, whipping them, tearing and Searing their Flesh; continued in use under Christian Emperors; as appears by the Examples of St. *Eutropius* and St. *Tigrius*, who were thus Tortured, under other pretences, but really out of spite to St. *Chrysostom*.

*Sozom. viii.  
Hist. c. xxiv.*

*l. viii. § iv. v.  
Ec. §. xi.  
F. de pen.*

It was an ordinary thing to condemn the meaner and more infamous sort of People to the Mines, as now to the Gallies; or to expose them to be torn to peices by wild Beasts in the *Amphitheatre*, for the diversion of the People. 'Tis not unlikely but that there were several other kinds of Punishments used in the Provinces; nor can it be denied, but that the Magistrates invented several new ones against the Christians; especially in the latter Persecutions, when their vexation to see the number of Christians still multiplying upon them doubled their Fury; and when the Devil Suggested to them the means of destroying rather their Souls than their Bodies. I believe the being Condemned to Prostitution is a kind of Punishment never thought of in the World, but against the Christian Virgins. The extraordinary Admiration which they saw the Christians had for Chastity, put them upon that lewd of Persecution. And of the like nature was that which St. *Jerome* relates of a young Martyr, whom they gently

*Martyr.  
Rom. xxviii.  
Ful.*

*Hier. mit.  
vita SPaul.*

gently tied to a Bed of Roses, and under the most delightful Circumstances, with an Immodest Harlot placed by his side; but so far was he from being overcome with the Temptation, that he bit of his Tongue and spit in her Face; in short, there were a multitude of Martyrs Massacred or put to Torments, without any form of Justice; either by the Fury of the enraged Populace, or by the revenge of their particular Enemies.

The Persecution generally opened with some Edict, forbidding the Assemblies of the Christians, and condemning to certain Penalties all those who refused to Sacrifice to the Gods. The Bishops presently gave notice thereof, Exhorting each other both to redouble their Prayers to God, and to Encourage their People. Many of the Christians hereupon took the advice given by Jesus Chrst to his Disciples, and fled for it. The Pastors and Priests divided themselves; the one part withdrew, the other part remained with the People; they kept themselves concealed with great care; for they were the Persons the most sought after, as being those upon whose loss the Flock would be scattered. Some of them the better to keep themselves unknown, changed their Names; others were content to purchase their quiet, and to give Money to save themselves from being Per-

*Cyp. Ep.  
xv. Ec.*

*Mat. x. 23.*

*Ab. S.  
Pion. Bar.  
an. 254.  
n. x.  
Can. xii.  
Petri Alex.  
co. i. Concil.*

Cypr. Ep.  
lii. ad An-  
tonian.  
Libellatici.

Orig. Cels.  
viii.

Const. Ap.  
v. c. v.

Persecuted: And thus by suffering in their Estates, they shewed how much less they valued their Temporal concerns than their Spiritual. But if any one gave Money to procure false Certificates, that he had obeyed the Emperors Edicts, he was counted in the number of Apostates; this being a tacit owning of himself an Idolater. The Rules of the Church forbade a Man voluntarily to expose himself to Martyrdom, or the doing any thing which might provoke the Heathens, and occasion Persecution; as the overthrowing their Idols, Firing their Temples, speaking Contemptuously of their Gods, or publicly opposing their Superstitions: Not but that there are Examples of holy Martyrs that have done such like things, and of many others who declared themselves, and owned their Religion: But those extraordinary Persons we must suppose to have been acted by a special impulse; so that their singular Examples are not to be drawn into Precedent. The general Rule was not to tempt God, but to wait with Patience till one was Discovered, and called upon by Authority to give an account of his Faith. In this matter there were two opposite Hæresies to be avoided, the *Gnosticks* on the one hand, and the *Marcionites* on the other; the *Gnosticks* and *Valentinians* decried the suffering of Mar-

Martyrdom as a needless thing, alleging that Christ had died to save us from Death; not distinguishing what kind of Death it was that Christ died to save us from. They pretended also, that flinging away our Lives, was to affront God; who since he refused the Blood of Bulls and Goats, it was not likely that he should delight in the Blood of Men. The *Marcionites* on the other hand causelessly ran themselves upon Martyrdom, out of their hatred of the Flesh, and of the maker of it, who they said was the evil Principle: So that the Church found it necessary to make inquiry into the Principles of those that had suffered Death for the Faith, to know upon what Grounds they proceeded, and whether they deserved to be Honoured as Martyrs; and this seems to have given the Original to Canonisations.

When the Christians were Apprehended, they were carried before the Magistrate, and by him Interrogated in open Court. If they denied themselves to be Christians, they were generally dismissed upon their own bare Word: For they knew that those who were true Christians would never deny their Faith, or that if they did once deny themselves to be Christians, they would effectually cease to be so. Yet sometimes for greater

Baron. an.  
cxlv. n. iii.  
Ec. x. an.  
ccv. n. xii.  
&c.

Bar. an.  
cxlvi n. xii.

Bar. an.  
cccii. n.  
c. xxvi.

As

Assurance they made them do upon the spot some act of Idolatry, or utter some Contumelious Word against Jesus Christ. If they confessed themselves to be Christians, then they endeavoured to beat them off from their Constancy, first by Perswasions or Promises, then by threatnings, or if neither of those prevailed, at last by Torments. They tried also to surprize them into the involuntary Commission of some Impiety; and then to make them believe that they had already Renounced their Religion; and that 'twas now too late to Recant. As they were brought upon their Trials in the Court, there were always standing near them some Idol and Altar: There the Heathens offered Victims in their Presence, and tried to make them eat some part of the Sacrifice; wrenching open their Mouths, and forcing down their Throats some bit of Flesh or at least some drops of Wine offered to the false Gods: And though the Christians well knew that *not that which goeth into the Mouth defileth a Man, but that which proceedeth out of the Heart*; yet for fear of giving the least occasion of Offence to those that were weak in the Faith they resisted with all their Might. Some having live Coals and Incence clapped into their Hands together, held them burning there

v Can. xiv.  
Petr. Alex.  
to i- Conc.  
p. 967.

Acta. SS.  
Tharaci  
Probi &  
Andron. an.  
290.  
Mar. xv. ii.  
18.

St. Cyrilla  
Martyr.  
v. Jul.

there for a long time, least in throwing away the Coals they should at the same time seem to offer the Incence.

The most usual Tortures they were put to was, to stretch them out at Length *Equuleus*. upon the Rack or Wooden Horse, with Cords tyed to their Feet and Hands, and drawn at both ends with Pullies, or to Hang them up by the Hands with heavy weights fastned to their Feet: to beat them with Rods or great Clubs, or with Whips stuck with sharp peices of Iron, which they called Scorpions, or with Thongs of raw Leather, or Leather loaded with Balls of Lead; so that many of them Dyed under the Blows. Others they stretched out at Length; Burnt and tore their Flesh and Skin asunder, either with Pincers, or Iron Curry-Combs; so that they often Bared them to the very Ribs, and opened the Hollow of their Bowels till, the Fire pierced into their Entrails and Choaked them to Death. To make their wounds yet more intolerable, they some times rubbed them over with Salt and Vinegar, and as they began to close up, Rip't them open again.

During all the time of their Torments they were still putting Questions to them, and every thing that was Spoken either by the Judge or by the party Suffering, was taken down in writing Word for Word,

Word, by the publick Notaires: So that upon every Tryal there was left upon Record a verbal Process far more exact than any of those made now a Days, by the Officers of our Courts of Justice. For as the Ancients had the Art of Writing by Abreviatures, or a sort of short Notes where every single Character stood for a word, they wrote as fast as they Spake. and took down precisely the very self same Words that were Utter'd, making every one Speak directly and in his own Person, whereas in our verbal Processes all the Discourse runs in the Third-person, and the whole is put into order, and worded by the Register.

These verbal Processes were what they called Acts. The Christians were very careful to get Copies of these Processes against their Brethren: And out of those Acts, as well as from what they themselves, who were present farther observed, were the Passions of the Martyrs reduce into Writing, and thus Authentically engrossed and preserved in the Churches. At Rome St. Clement set up seven Notaries, every one of which had the Charge of this Affair, and two Quarters of the City assigned him: And St. Cyprian gives it as a special Direction to his Priests and Deacons, that they should

care-

*Lib. Pontif. in Clem.*

*Cyprian. ep. xxxvi.*

carefully note the particular Day on which every one suffered Martyrdom. The greatest part of these Acts of the Martyrs were lost in the *Diocletian* Persecution, and though *Eusebius Cesariensis* had made a great Collection of them, yet that is lost too. So that we have but few of them now remaining. Yet the Names of the most eminent Martyrs are preserved in the *Menologies* and *Martyrologies*, which set down for every Day the Martyrs, of the Day and the Place, where their Feasts are Celebrated; to which were afterwards added the other Saints.

During these Interrogatories, they were Pressed to Discover their Complices, that is the other Christians, and Particularly the Bishops and Priests who Instructed them in their Religion, and the Deacons who assisted them; as also to Deliver up the Holy Scriptures. Twas in the *Diocletian* Persecution, that the Heathens were more particularly bent upon destroying the Books of the Christians, looking upon that as the most Effectual means of destroying their Religion it self. They sought after them with the utmost Diligence, and burned all they could Seize. They searched the Churches for them, the Lodgings of the Readers, and all private Houses. Upon all these Queries the Christians kept their secrets as Inviolable

*Acta C. tens. an. 303.*

*Acta Mart. Alutin apud Bar. An. 303. n. as 35. &c.*

*Act. 17. 34. n. 40. &c.* *Agapē &c. apud Bar.* as they did their Mysteries. They never named any Man's Person; they answered that they were Taught of God, they were assisted of God, they carryed the Holy Scriptures engraven on their Hearts. They who were so Cowardly to Deliver up their Bibles, or Discover their Brethren or their Priests, were Branded with the Odious name of Traitors, If the Martyrs under their Torments uttered any Words at all, they seldom were upon any other Subject than that of Glorifying the goodness of God and Imploring his Mercy and Assistance.

XVII.

Prisons,

AFTER this cruel Examination they who still persisted in the profession of Christianity, were delivered over to Punishment; but they were often remanded to Prison, to be kept yet longer upon trial of their Patience, and reserved for fresh Torments; and indeed, the Prisons themselves were but another sort of Torment. These Confessors of *Jesus Christ* were thrown into the Darkest and most Infectious Dungeons, their Hands and Feet loaded with Irons, heavy clogs of Wood hanging upon their Necks, or Fetters with cross Bolts, contrived so as either to keep them standing, or their legs distended if they lay. Sometimes they

strew-

strewed the Dungeon with little pieces of Pot-sherds or broken Glasse; and there they forced them to lye Naked, all full of Cuts and Wounds. Sometimes they left their Wounds to fester and putrify upon them, and in that condition suffered them to dye, with Hunger and Thirst. Sometimes they carefully fed and tended them but only to keep them in Heart for fresh Torments. They were generally denied the liberty of speaking one Word to any Person living; it having been found by experience, That under that Condition they had Converted many of the Infidels, even to the very Goalers and Soldiers themselves that guarded them. Sometimes they ordered to be brought unto them such Persons as they thought most likely to shake their Constancy; as their Fathers, their Mothers, their Wives, their Children; whose Tears and melting Discourses were another sort of Temptation; and many times of more dangerous Consequence than their Torments. If a Martyr were with Child they deferred her Execution till she was Delivered; for so the Law required. Thus the famous Martyr *St. Mammas*, was born in Prison of his Mother Martyr *St. Rufina*.

In the mean time the Church took a particular care of these Holy Prisoners. The Deacons often visited them, to do

*Prudent*  
*P. et Steph.*  
*4 de S. Vin-*  
*& al.*

*Mart. xvi.*  
*April. de S*  
*Enkratide.*

*Act. 17.*  
*Perpet. &*  
*Felic.*

*Martyr.*  
*31. Aug.*

*Const. Ap.*  
*v. c. ii.*  
*Cyp. Ep. xi.*  
*Martyr.*  
*xxiii. Dec.*

them

I



de Diacono S. An-  
chimis.

Martyr. iii.  
Fun. de S.  
Zena.

Tertul. ii.  
ad uxor.  
c. iv.

Tertul. de  
jejun. c. xii.  
Martyr.  
xi. Dec. de  
S. Thrason.

2. Cypr. Ep.  
v. and vi.

them all the Service they could, to go on their Errands, and to supply them with Necessaries. Their Brethren also frequently waited upon them, to support and encourage them to Suffer: They Congratulated their Torments, and wished to have a share in them; they kissed their Chains, looked after their Wounds, and supplied them with all Conveniences, as Beds, Cloaths, Diet, and other refreshments; insomuch, that *Tertullian* complained that they fared but too well in the Prisons; the Faithful spared no costs upon these Occasions. If they were denied entrance, they freely gave large Bribes to the Keepers and Soldiers to gain Access; nor would they be repulsed by their rudeness. They submitted to Blows and Contumelies, put up all Affronts and Injuries, patiently waited at the Prison Doors whole Nights together, in hopes of gaining the favourable Minute of satisfying their Charity. Whenever they could gain admittance, they looked upon the Prison as a Church, Consecrated by the presence of the Saints; there they made their Prayers, and thither the Priests resorted to Celebrate the Sacrifice, and afford the Confessors the blessed Consolation of not going out of the World without the Protection of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. But if it were a Bishop or Priest that

that was in Prison, the Faithful there Assembled themselves together, that they might not lose the Opportunity of receiving the Eucharist; and carrying it home with them to their Houses; and in such Cases as these, they made use of any means they could. Sometimes the Priests for want of Altars, made the Consecration upon the hands of the Deacons; and that illustrious Martyr St. *Lucian* of *Antioch*, being so staked down that he could not stir, made the Consecration on his own Breast. One may well imagin with what force of Exhortation these Administrations were attended. All the Church look'd upon these holy Prisoners as it were already Crowned in Heaven. They had a great influence upon the Prelates to obtain favour on the behalf of those whose weakness had betrayed them into Idolatry; insomuch, that it was found necessary to prescribe some Cautions and Limitations against the indiscreet Recommendations of some of the Confessors.

Acta apud  
Bar. anno  
311.

Cypr. de  
Laps. & ep.  
x. xi. xii.  
&c.

WHITHERSOEVER the Persecutors carried the Martyrs, the rest of the Faithful followed them; whether it were to the Rack or to the Execution: For the places of Execution were generally without the Walls of the City, and there the greatest part of the Martyrs, having

XVIII.  
Their  
care of  
Reliques.

either by the strength of Nature, or by Miracle out lived their Torments, were beheaded; thither did the faithful in vast numbers follow them, crowding the Streets as they passed along, and standing by them to the last, both to admire their Constancy, and by their Examples to fortify themselves against the like Trials. They carefully observed the last Words that came from their Mouths, which generally were Prayers; as that of St. Polycarp, recorded in the Epistle of the Church of *Smirna*; as also the Hymn of St. *Athenogenes*, an old Divine of the same Age, which he sung with a Joyful Heart just as he was entering into the Flames, and left a Copy of it to his Disciples. Many times also the standers by encouraged the Martyrs. *Origen* often hazarded his Life upon such Occasions; and there are many Examples of those who suffered Martyrdom themselves, for having exhorted others to it, as those mentioned in the Epistle of St. *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, and in the famous Epistle of the Church of *Vienna*.

The Faithful undauntedly stood by their Martyrs while they were under their Torments, to receive in Sponges or pieces of Linnen, the Blood that streamed from their Wounds, and to preserve it in Vials and put it in the Sepulchres with their Bodies.

Ap. Euseb.  
4. Hist. 15.  
Martyrol.  
xviii. Janu-  
ar.

Euseb. vi.  
Hist. 3.

Ap. Euseb.  
iv. Hist. 34

Ap. Euseb.  
v. Hist. i.

Martyrol.  
Rom. iii.  
Feb. idem.  
iii Jun. de  
S. Raula.

dies. Seven Women were put to Death for having thus gathered up the drops of the Blood of St. *Blasus*. And when St. *Cyprian* was Beheaded, the Faithful spread pieces of Linnen Cloth all about him, to receive his Blood: They were not less careful to carry off the Bodies of the Martyrs, or gather up the remainders of them; for there was often nothing left of them but Bones or Ashes; as when they were burnt to Death or devoured by wild Beasts: And thence came the name of Reliques. They spared no expences to redeem them out of the Hands of the Executioner, and give them an honourable Interment: And this very thing cost many of them their own Lives. There are many Examples of those who suffered Martyrdom themselves, for having kissed the dead Bodies of the Martyrs, or for having hindered others from insulting them after their Death, or for having searched for their Corps, to give them Christian Burial. Some have been thrown into the Common Shoars for having drawn out of them the Bodies of the Saints. St. *Asterius* the Senator, gained to himself the Crown of Martyrdom, by his having been seen to carry on his Shoulders the Dead Body of a Martyr. The Disciples of St. *Ignatius* carried his Reliques as far as from *Rome* to *Antioch*.

This

Pont. Diac.

V. Acta. SS.  
Thara. Sc.  
an. 290. &  
St. Bonif.  
an. 505.  
Martyr.  
Rom. xxi.  
Aug. de S.  
Paterno.

Martyr.  
Rom. xvii.  
Feb. de S.  
Juliano vii  
Dec. de S.  
Agathone.  
v. Mart.  
de S. Ni-  
candro. xxi.  
Aug. de S.  
Paterno.  
iii. Mart.  
de S. Aste-  
rio. xvii.  
Dec. xxvi.  
Aug. de S.  
Irenaeo &  
Abundio.

Roma. Sub-  
terranean. l. i.  
c. ii. iii.  
Epist. Ec-  
cles vien.  
apud. Euf.  
v. c. i.

This care which the Christians shewed to preserve the Reliques of the Saints, made their Persecutors on the other side as careful to mangle and tear asunder the Bodies of the Martyrs after their Death, and scatter abroad every part, and particle of them: And thus they thought they should lessen their Hopes of a future Resurrection. *You do but abuse your selves, (said they) with false hopes, in imagining that your Bodies shall be preserved to that Day; you expect to receive them again; you think to have them embalmed and wrapt up in the rich dresses those Women infatuated with your idle Fancies, designed to bestow upon them; but leave that care to us, we'll see your Bodies fairly disposed of.* They cast them to be devoured by wild Beasts: they threw their Corps among those of the Gladiators, or other Malefactors; they tied great Stones to their Bodies, and so cast them into deep Rivers; they burnt them and scattered their Ashes in the Air. But for all these Precautions, the greatest part of their Reliques were preserved, either by the extraordinary Zeal of the Faithful, or by the Miracles which God himself often wrought upon these Occasions.

As soon as they had laid the Bones of the Martyrs in their Tombs, they paid great Honours to the Tombs themselves, where they lay. *After they had put S. Laurence*

Acta S.  
Tharaci.  
Ec.  
Prudent.  
de S. Vinc.

Ap. Bar. in  
Martyr. ix.  
Aug.

rence in the Grave, (saith the Acts) *They Fasted and watched there three Nights together, with a vast concourse of Christians. The Priest St. Justin offered the Sacrifice, and they all Communicated.* Many Saints have suffered Martyrdom for being taken Watching or Praying at the Sepulchres of the Martyrs, or Celebrating their Feasts; which was Annually done, as appears by the Testimonies of Tertullian and Cyprian.

Martyr.  
xvii. Janu.  
de S. S. Di-  
odoro &c.  
xii. Aug. de  
S. Hilaria.  
xiv. Febr.  
de S. S. Pro-  
culo &c.  
xxiii. Janu.  
de S. Eme-  
rent.  
Tertull. de  
Coronâ. c.  
iii. Cyp.  
Ep. xxxiv.

THEY whose Lives they spared were either Banished at large or else obliged to suffer that which the Roman's called *Deportation*, which was a more Rigorous sort of Banishment, and accounted a Civil Death. These Exiles were sent either into the less Inhabited Islands, or into Barbarous Countries, upon the Frontiers of the Empire. Banishment at large was for Persons of the best Qualities; Deportation for those of a lower Condition: but the meanest of all were commonly condemned to labour in the publick Works, especially in the Mines. They were made Slave to the states, and therefore generally had a mark Branded on their Forehead with a Red-Hot-Iron, by which they might be known if they made their escape. They had always Iron on their Leggs, were poorly Fed, pitifully Clad, often Beaten and wretchedly abused.

XIX.  
The Con-  
fessors.

V. Serm.  
Cyp. ad  
Martyr.  
Inscripti.

fed.; in short, their Condition was at least as miserable, as is now that of Gally-Slaves. Their Fellow Christians took great care to Relieve them, and as much as was possible to make the hardships put upon them more Tolerable. All those that Dyed in this condition, for the Faith, were counted in the number of Martyrs: And they who ever returned out of their Exile or Slavery, were placed in the Rank of Confessors: For this was a Name given in Common to all those who had undergone any Suffering for the Faith, and generally to all those who had made a publick Confession of their Faith before the Judges. They had great Honours paid them all the rest of their Lives, and were often Advanced to Holy Orders for their Constancy.

XX.

Excommunication and Pennance.

Const. A. post. v. c. ii.

BUT as for such who had been Overcome by Persecution, So as to have Renounced their Faith, though it were Purely out of Weakness and under the Violence of Torments, yet unless they Submitted to do publick Pennance, they were Excommunicated. Excommunication deprived them not onely of the use of the Sacraments, but also debarred them from entring the Church, or holding any correspondence with the Faithful. No Man would Eat with them or so much as speak

speak to them; every one shunned them, as one would do Persons infected with the Plague. And so St. Paul commands that wicked Christians should be more shun'd than even the Heathens themselves; for from the Heathens they could not absolutely Separate without going out of the World. Nor were the Apostates to Idolatry the onely Persons thus used: The same Discipline passed upon Hereticks, Schismaticks and all notorious Offenders. For there were some bad Christians even in the best Times of the Church. St. Paul writing to the *Corinthians*, complains that there were among them many Persons guilty of Gross Uncleaness, who had not done Pennance for their Sins: And to the *Philippians*, that there were many among them whom he calls Enemies to the Cross of Christ. Such as these were cut off from the Congregation of the Faithful. There were scarce any but Bishops or Priests that might converse with them, and they onely in order to bring them to Repentance, so long as there was any hopes of it. Besides they did not cease to Pray for them. And thus they treated those who did not offer themselves to Pennance.

As for those that did, they were received with a great Compassion, but tempered with Discretion. They were made

1 Cor. v. 9. 10.

2. Cor. xii. 21.

Phil. iii. 18.

Epist. Cleri Rom ad Cy. pr. xxii.

*Tertull. de  
Penitent.  
c. xi. &  
de Pudic.  
c. xiii.*

made to understand that this was a favour not over hastily to be granted, and therefore they commonly took some time to try whether their Return was hearty and sincere. Pennance was Imposed publickly in the Church; where the Offender Clothed in Sackcloth, and covered with Ashes, threw himself down in the midst of the Congregation; embraced the Knees of the Faithful, and kissed their Feet, to move their Compassion and obtain their Prayers; to which the Bishop also Exhorted them in a discourse particularly made upon that occasion. The Penitent was still kept upon Tryal, and enjoined many Laborious Exercises. They obliged him to Fast either constantly, or at least very often, and live only on Bread and Water or some such hard Fare; proportioning his Abstinence according to the strength of his Nature, the grievousness of his Sin, and the fervour of his Repentance. They caused him to continue in Prayer for a long time together, either kneeling upon his Knees, or lying flat upon the Ground: To watch, to lye upon the bare Ground, to give Alms according to his Ability. During the time of his Pennance, he was to abstaine not only from all Recreations, but also from ordinary Conversation to keep no Company, meddle with no Business, nor have any com-

com-

communication so much as with the Faithful themselves, except in Cases of great Necessity. He went to the Church, but twas only to hear the Sermon and Prayers, and was not admitted to the Sacrament.

In the mean time the Bishop, either in his own Person, Visited the Penitents, or sent some Priest to Examine and deal with them according to the Dispositions he found in them, upon which he was very exact in making his Observations: Some he awakened with Terrors, and to others he administered Consolations; variously accommodating his Applications to the quality of the Patient and the symptoms of the Distemper. For the *Prelats* looked upon the discipline of Pennance as a sort of Spiritual Physick, and concluded that the Cure of a Diseased Soul required at least as much Skill, and Management, and Patience, and Attendance as that of the Body: For they knew that vicious Habits are not to be removed but by a long Course of time and a most exact Regimen. Thus in time Pennance came to be distinguished into its different Degrees, and to have the term of its Continuance Stated. But all that depended much upon the Discretion of the Bishops. As they were careful not to discourage their Penitents by too excessive a Severity

*Const. Apost. lib. 2. c. 61. 7, &c.*  
*Ibid. xli.*  
*Chrysost. ii. Sacerd. init.*  
*Ambros. in Psalm. 37. & 3. E. pist. xix.*  
*Epist. Can. S. Greg. Thaum.*  
*Epist. Can. Petr. Alex.*  
*Cypr. Ep. 52. ad Antonian.*

• which

which might make them become Desperate, and prove a Temptation to them to Relinquish the Faith, and to Revolt to Paganism: So on the other hand they found it necessary to check their Impatience; as knowing that nothing could be more Hurtful to them than too early an Absolution. A perfect Reconciliation was never granted till they saw it sought for with Tears, and Merited by an Effectual Reformation of their Manners. There was nothing to be got by Importunities, much less by Menaces. Those Bishops who outbraved the Persecutions of the Heathens, were not to be frightened with Words from their own Children. The time of Penance was always long, at least, unless there were some special Reason for the shortning of it; as the Extraordinary fervour of the Penitent, a mortal Distemper, or present Persecution: For in such a Case they were careful not to let them Dye without the Sacraments. This Dispensation which shorten'd the Regular Penance was called Indulgence, and was often granted upon the request of Confessors in Prison or Exile.

If the Penitent during the time of his Penance, committed any new Crime, he was obliged to begin his Penance again. If they saw his Punishment did no good

*Cler. Rom.*  
*ep. 31*

*Cypr. Ep.*  
*lv. ad Corn.*

*V. S. Cypr.*  
*Ep. li. E-*  
*pist. 3. a-*  
*pud Cypr,*  
*&c.*

good upon him, nor produced any change in his Life, they let him continue in that State; not admitting him to the Sacraments; and if after having received Absolution, he relapsed into any heinous Sin, there were no more Sacraments for him: For publick Penance was never granted for more than one time: All they could now do, was to pray for him, and to Exhort him to Repentance and newness of Life, and to bid him have hope in the Mercies of God, which are boundless. There were some Sins, for which, the Penance how sincerely and fully soever performed, was to continue one's whole Life time; after the Commission of which the Communion was never to be given, but upon the point of Death. Apostates who never prayed, Penance till they saw themselves in danger of Death, were not then admitted to it: And though it was granted in that Extremity to other sorts of Sinners; yet they did but little depend upon that Repentance, which look'd as if it had been forced upon Men only by the present dread of Punishment. They who had been once placed among the Penitents, though Absolved and Reconciled; yet could never after that be capable of receiving holy Orders, or of being advanced to any Ecclesiastical Ministry. And if a Priest or any Clerk

*S. August.*  
*Epist. liv.*  
*ad Maced.*  
*c. vii.*

*Cypr. ep. liii.*  
*ad Anton.*  
*Conc. Arel.*  
*i. c. xxii.*



Can. Apost.  
xxiv.

Clerk had committed a Sin deserving publick Pennance; he only lost his station in the Church; that is, he was for ever after Interdicted the Exercise of his Function, and reduced to the state of a simple Laick. But that they might not punish the same fault twice over, and out of Reverence to the Sacrament of Orders, they imposed on him no other Pennance.

If any one shall wonder at this Discipline of the Ancients, let him consider that the Sins to which Pennance was due, were in those Days rarely known among Christians; for as with us, Persons of Honour, who are well Educated and settled in the World, seldom fall into those Crimes which bring them so far under the lash of the Law, as to make them liable to the infamy of Publick Punishments; so of old, it did not often happen that Christians so carefully admitted, and so well instructed, should be guilty of Adultery, Homicide, or other such like heinous Sins which deserved Death. *Tertullian* declares that the Catholics were easily distinguished from the Hereticks, by the difference of their Behaviour; and he boldly upbraids the Heathen, that their Goals were filled with none but Heathens like themselves; or if any Christians were there, it was upon

De præf.  
cript. c. xli.  
xlii. Apol.  
c. iv, v.

no

no other account but barely for their being Christians: Or if (saith he) any other Crime can be laid to their charge, they are no longer Christians. Innocence with us is a necessary Vertue; we understand it perfectly, as having learned it of God who is the best Master, and we practice it with the greatest Care, as being obliged to it by that Judge whom we must not dispise.

THERE were some Christians who XXI. +  
Practiced all the Exercises of Pennance without being obliged to them, and without being excluded the Sacraments; but then it was out of their own voluntary Devotion, in imitation of the Lives of the Prophets and St. John the Baptist, and following the Councils of St. Paul, for Exercising themselves unto Godliness, and keeping under the Body to bring it into Subjection. These were called *Asceticks*; that is to say, Exercisants. They generally kept themselves close shut up in their own Houses, where they lived in great retirement; adding to the usual Frugality of Christians, some extraordinary Fasts and Abstinences. They kept themselves to what they called *Xerophagy*, that is feeding only upon dry Diets, and held out their Fasts to two or three Days together, or some times longer. They accustomed themselves to wear Sack-cloth

Asceticks,  
Virgins,  
Widows,  
Deaconesses.

1 Tim. iv.

1 Cor. ix.  
27.

cloth, to walk Bare-Foot, to sleep upon the Ground, to Watch the greatest part of the Night, to be constantly reading the holy Scriptures, and as much as was possible to Pray without ceasing. *Orig.* *gen* for some time led this Life; and many of these *Asceticks* became great Bishops and Doctors.

*Euseb. Hist.*  
*vi. c. iii.*  
*Hier. de*  
*Script. 87.*  
*in pierio.*

All the *Asceticks* lived in great Continnence, and all Christians in general highly admired that Vertue so much recommended by *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles. A young Man of *Alexandria*, under the reign of the Emperor *Antonine*, presented a Petition to the Governour of that City, that he might have a Surgeon allowed him to make him an Eunuch; and many there were who did so in good earnest; so that the Church was obliged to make a Law on purpose to repress that indiscreet Zeal.

*Iust. Orat.*  
*ad Anton.*  
*Pium.*

*Can. Nic. i.*

There were a great number also of young Persons of the Female Sex, who Consecrated their Virginity to God either by the Advice of their Parents, or of their own proper Motion: These Virgins led the *Ascetick* Life; for they did not look upon Virginity as any thing, if it were not attended with great Mortification, with Silence, Retirement, Poverty, Labour, Fastings, Watchings, and continual Praying. They were not esteem-

*Hier. Ep.*  
*de Asellâ.*

ed.

ed as Virgins who would not deny themselves the common Diversions of the World, even the most Innocent; as the taking too great a delight in Conversation, the affecting a Pleasantness and agreeableness of Humour and Discourse, so as to make a shew of their Wit and Ingenuity; much less would they endure those that set up for *Bells*, for Dressing, Perfuming Long-Trains, and moving with an affected Air. *St. Cyprian* recommends scarce any thing else to Christian Virgins but the renouncing all the vain Ornaments of the Body and Ostentation of Beauty. He well knew how fond young Women are of such gaudy Trifles, and of how pernicious a Consequence they might prove to those of their Profession. In the first Ages the Virgins Consecrated to God, generally lived at home with their Parents, or in private by themselves, two and two together, never going abroad but when they went to Church, where they had a place allotted them to sit by themselves, separate from the rest of the Women. If any one violated her Holy Resolution and Married, she was enjoined Pennance.

*Cyp. de*  
*Hab. Virg.*

*Ambros de*  
*virg laps.*  
*c. vi.*

The Widows who renounced second Marriage, passed their time much after the same manner as the Virgins, in Fastings, Praying, and the other Exercises of the *Ascetick* Life; but they did not keep

*Hier. in*  
*Ep. Paulæ.*

K

them-

themselves so close shut up, as being more employed in the outward Acts of Charity, as in visiting and relieving the Sick and Imprisoned, and more especially the Martyrs and Confessors; in taking care of the Poor, in entertaining and attending upon Strangers, in burying the Dead, and generally in the Offices of Charity: And indeed all Christian Women, whether Married or Widows, made these kind of Works the greatest of their Employment, rarely appearing abroad, but upon the doing of some good Office, or when they went to Church. But the

*Tertul. ad  
xxor. c. iv.*

*1 Tim. v. 9.*

*v. Const.  
Apost. l. iii.*

*Const. Apost.  
vi. c. xvi.*

Widows being more at liberty from other Engagements, dedicated themselves wholly to these Services: If they were Rich, they liberally Distributed their Alms; if they were Poor, the Church maintained them. They chose for their Deaconesses the most Aged of their Widows, of Sixty years or upward; the most discreet, and those who had best approv'd themselves in all the Exercises of Charity:

This Office was also sometimes assigned to Virgins. They were called Deaconesses, not as if they were counted of the Clergy; for Women cannot partake of any part of the Priest-hood; but because they exercised toward the Women some part of the Deacons Office. Their business was to visit those of their own Sex, whom Po-

verty,

verty, Sicknes, or any other distress rendered proper Objects of the Churches care; to instruct the Female *Catechumens*, *Con. Apost. iii.* or rather to repeat to them the Instructions of the *Catechist*. They presented them to Baptism; and upon that occasion assisted them in dressing and undressing them, and for sometime after over looked these new Converts, to break and Discipline them into a Christian Behaviour. In the Church, they kept the doors on the Womens side, took care to see every one seated in her proper place, and that all behaved themselves there with a Silence and Modesty becoming the Place. The Deaconesses gave an account of every thing they did to the Bishop, or by his Order to the Priests or Deacons. They served Principally to inform the Church of the Necessaries of the other Women, and to do for them by their directions, those things which they could not with decency perform in their own Persons.

There was required a more than Ordinary share of Patience and Discretion in the Prelates to Govern all these Women. To keep up these Deaconesses to that Sobriety and Industry, which was so necessary for their Office, but difficult for their Age; to keep them from growing either too easie and credulous in their charge,

or from being troublesome, maliciously curious, Cholerick and excessively Severe. Care also was to be taken lest under the pretence of Catechising, they should set up themselves for Spiritual Directresses and Judges; lest they should speak indiscreetly concerning the Mysteries; lest they should misreport matters, and spread abroad Errors and Falsities; lest they should prove great Talkers, and giddy Ramblers and bussey-bodies. There was required also a wonderful gentleness of Spirit, to bear with the Infirmities of the other Women and Widows, besides Deaconesses. and to cure them of their weaknesses, as Sadness, Emulation, Envy, Evil-speaking, Exceptiousness, and Murmuring, even against their Pastors themselves; in a Word, all those ill Dispositions usually attending their Sex and Age; especially when 'tis attended with Poverty, Sickness, or any other such like uneasy pressure.

XXII.

Their  
care of the  
Poor.

THE Church took care of all her Poor, of what Age or Sex so ever; but they did not count those Poor that were able to work for their living; because they were in a Condition of not being burdensom to any, and in a Capacity of assisting the other Poor: Nor did they think it sufficient for a Christian to labour just

just enough for his own Subsistence, but that he ought also to contribute toward the maintaining of those who could do nothing for themselves: Besides, the Civil Law had made Provision against lusty Beggars and Vagrants. For as slavery was as yet in use; if they were free, they were forced to serve the Publick, and labour in tilling the Earth as Slaves to the State, or if they were Slaves before, any one that would, might seize them. It was the same case with exposed Children or Foundlings. They belonged to any one that would take them and be at the Charge of bringing them up; so that there were scarce any other Beggars but old Slaves, whose Masters were Inhuman enough to cast them off, when they were past their Labour; or those that were Blind, Maimed, or otherwise disabled.

And these the Christians took into their Care. *Prudentius* hath given us a draught of them in the Description he makes of those which *St. Laurence* presented to the *Præfect* of *Rome* as the Treasures of the Church. They took care of Children also: as in the first place, the Orphans of Christian Parents, and especially the Martyrs; next they took into their keeping, Children exposed, and all others they could get into their Hands, to breed them up in the true Religion: For in all this care they

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took

*2. Basil.  
Reg. fus.  
inter al.  
xlii, &c.*

*L.vii.Cod.  
de Mend  
valid. l. xi.*

*Colonatu  
perpetuo  
fulciatur.*

*Argument:  
l.iii.Cod.de  
inf. expos.*

*Peristeph.  
2.*

*Const.  
Apost. iv.c.  
i, ii.*

took of the Poor, their principal regard was to their Spiritual Concerns, and to their Temporal Welfare only in order to their Spiritual. Therefore in their Charity, they always preferred Christians before Infidels; and among Christians, those that were most remarkable for Virtue were taken care of first; but as for the incorrigible, they left them to shift for themselves. They would not so much as receive Alms indifferently from any one that offered it: They would not accept of it from Persons Excommunicated, or from Publick and Notorious Sinners; as Usurers and Adulterers. They chose rather to expose their Poor to the want of Necessaries; or more properly speaking, to trust divine Providence with them, which could otherwise provide for them.

Const.  
Apost. iv. c.  
v, vi, vii. ix.

v. Bar. an.  
44. n. lxxviii.  
Ec.

Tertull.  
Apol. c.  
xxxix.

Euseb. lib.  
vi. c. xliii.

Every Church raised a good Fund for the subsisting of its Poor, entertaining Strangers, Burying of the Dead, and other such like common Expences, as the providing for its Clerks, the Luminary, the sacred Vessels, and all the rest. The Church of Rome, under the Pope St. Cornelius, An. 250. maintained one hundred and fifty four Clerks, and more then fifteen hundred Poor; and besides that, from its first Foundation during all the time of the Persecutions, it always took care to send large Supplies to the Poor Churches

Churches of the Provinces, and to the Confessors condemned to the Mines: The common Goods of the Church for the three first Ages, consisted in few things else but Moveables, in Provisions, Cloaths and ready Money; all which arose out of the Offerings made by the Faithful Weekly or Monthly, or as every one was pleased to make of himself: For in these Offerings there was nothing fix'd or Constrained. As for Lands, the Persecution made both the purchase and the keeping of them any long time Impracticable.

And these were the Treasures of the Church the Heathens were so eager to get into their own Hands, and which often proved one principal cause of the Persecutions; as appears by the example of St. Laurence: It belonged to the Deacons to take care of all these things. It was their business to receive all that was offered for the common uses of the Church, to see it carefully laid up, and safely kept, and to distribute it according to the direction of the Bishop, who ordered the disposal of it according to the account he received from them of the particular occasions of those that wanted Relief: They were to inform themselves of these Particulars, and report them to the Bishop; and to keep exact Lists both of the Clerks

Epist. Dion  
Corinth. ap  
Euseb. iv. c.  
xxiii.

v. Acta Co-  
lonCirtens.  
an. xxx.

Tertull.  
Apol. c. 39.

Prudent.  
peri. Steph.  
Hymn ii.

v. Bar. an.  
xxxiv. n.  
227.

Const.  
Apost. iii.  
c. xix.

Const.  
Apost. ii.  
c. 28.

Const.  
Apost. iii. c.  
lvii.

XXIII.  
Their  
Hospitali-  
ty.

the Virgins, the Widows, and all the other Poor, whose dependance was on the Church; to enquire into all Persons when they first presented themselves to the Churches Charity, and to inspect the Behaviour of those already received into it; to observe whether they were worthy of that relief; to provide Lodgings for Strangers, and to consider by *whom* and *how* those Expences should be defraied. Upon all occasions the *Laicks* had either to desire any thing of the Bishop, or to Communicate any thing to him, they first Addressed themselves to the Deacons, for they would not press and intrude upon the Bishop himself, both out of respect to his Person, and for fear of being troublesome; So that the Deacons led a very busy, Active Life. It was necessary for them to walk much about the Town; and sometimes they were obliged to take longer Journies and Travail abroad; and for that reason, they had neither Cloaks, nor any of the larger sort of Garments worn by the Priests; but only *Tuniques* and *Dalmaticks* to be always more at liberty, for Action and Motion.

HOSPITALITY was commonly used even amongst the Heathens themselves. Among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, their Inns and Publick-Houses of Entertainment-

tainments were rarely frequented by Persons of any Fashion or Quality. In every Town where their Concerns might lead them, they took care to make themselves some particular Friend; in whose Family they might be entertained during their Abode in that Place; repaying their Friend who entertained them the like Kindness at their own Houses, if his occasions ever brought him that way. This usage grew to Prescription in Families. It was the principal cement of Friendship and Correspondence between the Cities of *Greece* and *Italy*; and afterward spread over the whole *Roman* Empire. Nay so sacred was this Priviledge of Entertainment, that they made it a part of their Religion. *Jupiter*, said they, Presided over the Affair; both the Persons entertained, and the Table at which they Eate were counted Sacred.

'Tis no wonder then that the Christians should be so forward in Exercising Hospitality, who looked upon themselves as Friends and Brothers to one another; and who knew that Jesus Christ had recommended Hospitality, as one of the most Meritorious Performances. If a Stranger discovered to them that he made Profession of the Orthodox Faith, and lived in the Communion of the Church, they received him with open Arms. He that

Vide Thomassin de Tesser. Hospital.

Mat. xxv.



that should have shut his Doors against such an One, would have been thought to have shut out Jesus Christ himself. But first they Expected that he should make himself fully known. To that purpose those that Travailed, took with them Letters from their Bishop: And these Letters had certain Marks, known only to Christians among themselves. These Letters gave an account of the Quality and Condition of the Bearer; whether he was a Catholick; whether after having been an Heretick or Excommunicate he was again Reconciled; whether a Catechumen or a Penitent; whether in Holy Orders, and in what Degree of Orders: For the Clergy never Travailed without Dimissory Letters from their Bishops. They had also their Recommendatory Letters to Distinguish Persons of Merit; as Confessors, or Doctors, or those who stood in need of any particular Assistance.

The first Act of Hospitality was to wash the Feet of their Guests. Instances of which we meet with often in Scripture. And this was but a necessary Refreshment, considering what sort of Shoes they anciently Wore. And therefore St. Paul joyns the Lodging of Strangers and the washing of their Feet together. If the Guest was in full Communion

V. Baron  
An. 142.  
n. 7.  
V. Prior.  
de Lit. Canon.

Manners of  
the Israelites in  
English.  
Pag. 77.  
1 Tim. v.  
10.

nion with the Church, they joyned in Prayer, and gave him all the respect of the House: As to Pray before them, to sit uppermost at Table, to Instruct the Family. They counted themselves Happy in having his Company, and looked upon their Meat as in some sort Sanctified by his taking part with them. The Clergy were every where Honoured proportionably to the Station they held in the Church. If a Bishop Traveled, he was in all places where he passed, invited to perform the Office, and to Preach among them; shewing thereby the Unity of the Priest-hood and of the Church. There have been some Saints to whom their Hospitality in entertaining the Clergy or such others as came to preach the Gospel, proved the occasion of their Martyrdom; as the Famous St. *Alban* in *England* and St. *Gentian* at *Amiens*.

Const. Ap.  
ii. c. 58.

Martyr.  
xxii. Jun.  
id. 11.  
Decem.

The Christians were Hospitable even toward the Infidels themselves. Thus they Executed with a great Forwardness of Affection, the orders of their Prince, obliging them to Lodge his Soldiers, Officers, or others Travailing upon the Service of the State, and to furnish them with Provisions. St. *Pacomus* having Listed himself very Young into the *Roman* Army, he and the Party to which he belonged were Embarqued on Ship board, and

Vie de St.  
Pacomre.c.  
iv.

and Landed at a certain little City : were he was amazed to see with what Civilities the Inhabitants received them ; Treating them not like Soldiers, but as if they had been their Old Friends and Acquaintance. And upon inquiry who they were, he was told they were a People of a particular Religion, called Christians. From that time he informed himself of their Doctrine ; and this was the Occasion of his Conversion.

## XXIV.

Their  
Care of  
the Sick  
and Burial  
of the  
Dead. *Mat. xxv. 36. Dionys. Alex. ap. Euseb. 7. Hist. c. 22.*

THE Christians took great care to visit the Sick, an Office of Charity, so much Recommended in the Gospel. The City of *Alexandria* being afflicted with a great Mortality under the Emperor *Valerian*, The Christians readily took that opportunity of shewing their Charity even towards their Persecutors. They so freely offered themselves to assist the Sick under their Extremities ; that many both of the Clergy and Laicks Dyed themselves of the common Distemper, and were honoured as Martyrs. The Priests visited such Christians as were Sick to Comfort them, to Pray by them, and Administer to them the Sacraments. In such Cases the Viaticum was given only under the Species of Bread, and in case of Necessity might be carried to them by a Laick, as appears by the History of Old *Serapion*.  
Be-

Besides the unction of the Consecrated Oil, administered by the authority of St. *James*, Sick Persons were often recovered by the Application of another Oil, called the *Oleum Benedictum* or Blessed Oil, which was Indifferently applyed either to the Faithful or Infidels, either by Priests or Laicks, according as they had received the gift of Miracles ; some times they made use of the Oil of the Lamps for this purpose, which were kept Burning before the Tombs of the Martyrs.

The Heathen having no hopes after this Life ended, looked upon Death either purely as an Evil which deprived them of the Enjoyments of this World, or as an *Annihilation* that Deliverd them from all the Sufferings of it. There were scarce any among them that gave any Credit to the Fabulous Tales of the Poets concerning the Punishments and Rewards of another Life. So that as for Dying Persons their Business with them was not to Instruct or Exhort, but to Divert them ; and as for themselves, their only care was to prolong as far as was possible the Pleasures of Life. The only Rule they had to goe by was, as St. *Paul* after the Prophet *Isaia* Expresses it, *Let us Eat and Drink for to Morrow we Dye*. And this is the Point in which *Horace* Terminates all his Morals. And the  
Death

*Euseb. vi. Hist. xlii. Jam. 5. 14.*

*V. Baron. an. lxxiii. n. 16.*

*Adeone me delirare censes, ut ista credam ? Cic. Tus. Quest. l. i. n. vi. Nec Pueri credunt. Juven.*

*1 Cor. xv. 31.*

Tacit. An-  
nal. xvi.

Death of *Petronius* under *Nero* is one of the fullest Instances I have met with of these Principles reduced into Practice. Those that were more Grave and Serious endeavoured to Support themselves by the Maxims of Philosophy, seeking thereby to Banish out of their Minds the Terrors of Death, and to learn the Art of being willing to Dye.

The Christians proceeding upon other Principles, looked upon Death only as an Entrance upon Eternity. So that leading good Lives, as most of them did, they saw cause rather to wish for Death than to Dread it; and the present loss of their Friends or Relations, was the less afflicting, for the hopes of their Happiness; and the expectation of seeing them in Heaven, made their Satisfaction excel their Grief. They looked upon Death to be only in the Language of the Scripture, a Sleep; and thence comes the Name which they gave their Places of *Buryal*, a *Cemetery*, which in Greek signifies a *Dormitory*. In farther Testimony of their Belief of the Resurrection of the Flesh, they took great care about the Sepulchres of the Dead; and according to their several Abilities, were at great Expences upon them. They did not burn the Bodies of their Dead as the *Greeks* and *Romans*; and as little did they approve of the Curiosity

1. King. ii.  
10. 11. xliii.  
14. 20. &c.

riosity of the *Egyptians*, who Embalmed the Bodies of their Dead, and kept them by them in their Houses lying upon Beds exposed to open View. St. *Antony* Vigorously opposed this Custome which continued in use to his time. Vie S. Ant. c. xxxi.

The Christians buried their Dead after the manner of the *Jews*. They first washed, then Embalmed them; Employing (saith *Tertullian*) more Perfumes and Aromatick Gums in this use, than the Heathens did in their Sacrifices. They Wrapped them up in fine Linnen, or Silk, and some times put them on rich Habits. They laid them forth for the space of three Days; during which time they constantly attended the Dead Body, and passed those Days in Watching and Praying by it. Then they carryed it to the Grave, accompanying the Corps with Torches and Flambeaus, with singing of Psalms and Hymns to the Praise of God, and in Testimony of their Hope of the Resurrection. They made Prayers also on their behalf; offered the Sacrifice, and made their *Agape* or *Love-Feast* for the Poor, distributing likewise other Alms among them. At the end of the Year they made a fresh Commemoration for them, and so from Year to Year, besides the standing Commemoration for the dead always joined with the Sacrifice. V. Baron. an. xxxiv. n. 310. &c. Apol. c. xlii. Const. Apos. vi. c. ult. viii. c. xli. 42. &c. Prud. Hym. in Exeq. Tertul. de. Cor Mil. c. iii. Orig. in Job. Hom. iii. Cypr. ep. lxvi.

The

*Foffores.  
laborantes.  
vid. Bar.  
an. xiv. n.  
288.*

*Martyr.  
viii. Dec.*

*V. Tim ijs.  
Disc. p. ii.  
liv. iii. c.  
xiii. xiv.*

The Church had Officers appointed on purpose for the Burying of their Dead, who were called Grave-makers or Labourers, and who are sometimes reckoned among the Clergy. The Priests and Bishops themselves looked upon the Employment as an Honour; and St. Eutychian the Pope, who was himself a Martyr, is reported to have Interred with his own Hands the Bodies of three hundred and forty two Martyrs. There were often together with the Body put into the Sepulchre several other things, either as marks of honour to the deceased, or to preserve his Memory; as the Badges of his Dignity, the Instruments of his Martyrdom, Vials or Sponges filled with his Blood, the Acts of his Martyrdom, an Epitaph on him, or at least his Name, Medals, Leaves of *Laurel* or of some other *Ever-green*, some Crosses and the Gospel. They used to lay the Body on its Back, the Face turned to the East. The Heathens, to preserve the Memory of their Dead, Built stately Sepulchres over them; either by the sides of the great Roads, or in the open Fields. The Christians on the contrary, removed their Dead out of Sight, either after the common way of Interment, or laying them in Vaults under Ground; such as were the *Tombs* or *Catacombs* near *Rome*.

These

These *Catacombs* were places under Ground, cut out of Quarries of soft and brittle Stone, or hollowed out of the Beds of Sand; thus contrived by the Christians for their Burying Places: There are winding Staires leading down to them, and long Walks or Streets which have on each side of them, cut into the Earth two or three rows of deep Nitches, in which the Bodies were placed at *first*; for *now* the greatest part of them are taken away. At certain distances from each other, are spacious Chambers, vaulted over and Solid as the rest, having also Nitches cut in them like those of the Walks. The greatest part of these Chambers are painted with divers Histories of the old and new Testament; as their Churches also were wont to be. And in some of these *Camiteries*, there are Subterranean Churches: In many of them there have been found Marble Coffins, adorned with Figures of *Bass Relief*, representing the same Histories as the Paintings do. These were the Sepulchres of the most considerable Persons; every one of these *Camiteries* is like a City under Ground, and some of them two or three Stories deep: In them the Christians found a place of retreat during the Persecutions; there they kept the Reliques of the Martyrs; there they met and Celebrated the holy Offices; nay,

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and

and there some of them constantly resided, as is written of many of the Popes. The Book called *Roma Subterranea*, is a description of these ancient Cæmities: They remained the greatest part of them, for a long time unknown; the entrance into them having been stopped up; and 'twas but about the end of the last Century that

they were discovered. These Cæmities are sometimes called the Councils of the Martyrs; their Bodies being there Assembled together; or *Arenarea* from the Sandy Soil where they were generally placed. In *Africa* they were also called *Area*.

They had of old a Religious ambition of being buried near to the Bodies of the Martyrs; and this is that which at last brought so many Graves and Tombs into the Churches: For it was of a long time observed not to bury the Dead but without the Walls of Cities. The Veneration they had for Reliques, and their distinct Belief of the Resurrection, wore out that Aversion among the Christians which the ancients, even the *Israelites* themselves had for dead Bodies and Graves.

XXV.

Their  
Bishops,  
Priests,  
& Clerks.

TO finish the Character of these first Times, I must necessarily add a Word or two concerning the Pastors and Ministers of the Church. *Origen* making the Comparison

parison before mentioned of the profane *Ecclesiæ* with the Christian Churches, openly Avers it as a thing undeniable, That those who preside over the Christian Churches, had in reality that Eminency of worth and Vertue above others, which the Magistrates of Cities had only in Name and shew; and this he speaks in his Book against *Celsus*, where he had ridiculously exposed himself to the Heathens had not the thing been manifestly So. 'Tis indeed plain Matter of Fact: The one and thirty Popes who filled up the three first Ages, were all but two of them Martyrs; and during the six Ages following to the ninth Century, there are not above three or four of them whom the Church hath not acknowledged for Saints. Most of the Bishops mentioned in History for the three first Ages, stand upon Record for singular Examples of Vertue and Piety; so that the Emperor *Alexander Severus* proposes the Christians Method of choosing their Clergy as an Example of the Care which ought to be taken of enquiring into the Manners and Qualifications of all Persons to be admitted into publick Employments. They chose therefore to put into the sacred Functions those Christians whose Sanctity was more Eminently remarkable, and whose Vertue was the most approved: This honour

*Contr. Cels.*  
iii. p. 130.

*Lamprid*  
in *Alex.*

*Tertul. Ap.*  
c. xxxix.  
v. *Orig.*  
*Contr. Cels.*  
lib. 8. in fi.  
*Cypr. Ep.*  
33, 34, 35.

was ordinarily the recompence of such Confessors whose Faith had been sufficiently proved by Torments; such were *Aurelius* and *Celerinus*, whom St. *Cyprian* made *Readers*; the last of whom, had his Body deeply marked with many Scars, for the Testimony of his Constancy; besides that, his Grandmother and his two Uncles were glorious Martyrs. Such was *Numidicus* the Priest, who exhorted and perswaded many others to suffer Martyrdom, and his own Wife among the rest, was himself led with them to the place of Execution, and there left for Dead.

*Cypr. Ep.*  
xxxiii.

The Bishop often chose his Clerks at the instance of the People, at least not without their Knowledge, and always with the advice of his Clergy. But whether the Persons themselves to be Ordained were desirous of it or not; that they little regarded. They did not only not wait till they should offer themselves to Ordination; but many times, partly by force, partly by Artifice, constrained them to take holy Orders upon them, even against their own Will; so that some Persons so ordained, could never prevail with themselves to exercise their Functions.

*Cypr. ep. 68.*

*Con. Ap.*  
iii. c. 4. &c.

The Bishop was chosen in the presence of the People by the Bishops of the Province, Assembled together in the vacant Church, at least to the number of two or three

three of them; for it was not easy in those times to hold great Synods, unless in the Intervals of the Persecution; and therefore sometimes the Sees of the ancient Churches have continued vacant a long time together.

*Greg. Tur.*  
x. hist. c. 31.

The Ordinations were always preceeded by a Fast, and accompanied with Prayers: These Prayers were generally continued from the Saturday-Eve to the Sunday following; all that Night they passed in Watching and Praying, and the next Day came on the Ordination; the principal Ceremony whereof hath always been the Imposition of Hands. The Ordination was followed by the Sacrifice.

*Act. xiii. 2.*  
3.  
*v. Bar. an.*  
xlv. n. 74.

The Bishop ordained no more Priests, Deacons, or other Clerks, then just so many as were necessary for the Service of his Church; that is to say, for all his Diocess. This number was not great, since in the time of the Pope St. *Cornelius*, Anno Christi 250, the Church of Rome had but forty six Priests, and but one hundred fifty four Clergy of all sorts; though the People belonging to it were vastly numerous. The Bishops were much more numerous in Proportion; every City that had any considerable number of Christians in it, had also its Bishop. Hence it is, that in the Lives of the first Popes, we find more Bishops ordain-

*Euseb. vi.*  
*Hist. c. 43.*

*Lib. Pontifical.*



dained by them than Priests : They ordained Priests only for their own Diocess, but made Bishops for the greatest part of *Italy*. The Clergy depended entirely upon the Bishop, living under his direction in the nature of Disciples; and 'twas his business to instruct and Discipline them; to advance them from one Degree to another, and allot to every one their different Functions, according to the different Talents he found in them. The

*Martyr.*  
xxiv. Jan.  
iii. Feb. xxx.  
Apr. de S.  
Laurent.  
xi. Mai. de  
S. Valente.

young Martyrs that suffered with St. *Babylas*, St. *Blasus*, and with some other Saints, were manifestly some of those which were breeding up for holy Orders. The Clergy ordained by one Bishop, could not without his permission quit him to go serve under another; and one Bishop so receiving another Bishops Clergy, would have been condemned as a kind of Theft.

*Can. Apost.*  
xiv.

Yet this Authority of the Bishops over their Clergy was no Arbitrary and Despotick Power, but a Government mixed with Love. The Ecclesiasticks shared some part of the Authority with the Bishop, since he did nothing of Importance without their Advice: The Priests especially were consulted with, who made as it were the Church's Senate. The Priests were so Venerable and the Bishops so Humble, that to common appearance there

there was but little difference between them. Nay the Clergy had some kind of Authority over the Bishop himself, being the continual Inspectors both of his Life and Doctrine. They attended on him in all his Publick Functions as Officers do on the Magistrate, or rather as Disciples on their Master. For the Clerks were to the Bishops as the Apostles to Jesus Christ, his constant Attendants. If therefore any Bishop should have presumed either to Teach or Practise any thing contrary to Apostolical Tradition; the more elderly of the Priests and Deacons would presently have Remonstrated against it. They would first in a Friendly manner have Advertised him of his Error; if that took no effect, they would have made their complaints against him to the other Bishops, or at last have accused him before a Council.

The greatest part of the Clergy led the *Asceticque* Life, feeding onely on Pulse or dry Dyets; Fasting often, and practising other such like Austerities as far as the great Labours of their Callings would admit of. Above all Continence was in a more especial manner required of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Not but that Married Persons were often advanced to these Orders; For how could they have found amongst the *Jews* and Hea-

*Const. Apost.*  
ii. c. 23.

thens that were Dayly Converted to Christianity any considerable number of Persons that had preserved an absolute Continence to their advanced Years. It was much to find those that had confined themselves only to one Wife, in that liberty which the *Jews* and other Eastern People took, of having many Wives at once, and the custom of Divorce Universally admitted, which put them often upon changing their Wives. But when a Married Person was made a Bishop, he began from that time forward to look upon his Wife only as his Sister: And to the same Rule hath the Latin Church all ways kept her Priests and Deacons. Yet they were still obliged to provide for their Wives, and not to cast them off as Strangers. And the Women out of Regard to the Dignity of their Husbands, were sometimes called by the Name of *Priestesses*. In Greece and the *East*, this strict Rule of Continence came in Course of time to be less and less regarded. But in no place whatsoever did the Catholick Church ever allow a Priest to Marry after his Ordination: If he did, he was for his Incontinence Degraded of his Order, and reduced to the State of a simple Laick. As for the Inferior Clerks, as Readers and Doorkeepers, they were commonly Married

1 Tim. iii.  
2.

Ep. Decret.  
Siricij ad  
Himer. c.  
vii.  
Can. Apof.  
vi.

Presbyteræ.

Episcopæ.

Can. Neo-  
test. i.

Per-

Persons, and Cohabited with their Wives. So that a great part of them passed their whole Lives in these lower Orders, at least they continued in them for many Years, till they either lost their Wives, or else by mutual Consent, they agreed to Separate from each other, in order to the leading a more perfect Life: Yet was Marriage always spoken of by Christians as an Honourable State: And that the rather, because there were some Hereticks who professed an Abhorrence of it, and others who Absolutely condemned all second Marriages as Unlawful.

All the Clergy even to the Bishops themselves, Lived after a Poor, at least a Plain and Ordinary manner; having no thing as to outward appearance to Distinguish them from the common People. In the Persecutions, as they were the Persons, the most sought after, they had no mind to make themselves known by their Habit or any other marke of their Profession. If in any thing they Differed from the common People, twas in appearing more like the Philosophers. Many of them had parted with all their Temporal Possessions to the Poor, before their being advanced to Holy Orders; and many of them again after their Ordination still continued, like *St. Paul*, to Live by the Labour of their Hands.

Not

S. Cypri.  
Ep. xxxiv.

Not that they were obliged so to do. The Church always took care of her Clergy, supplying them with all Necessaries out of her common Treasure. And accordingly, every Clerk received either Weekly or Monthly, a certain Distribution, either in Money or of Provisions in *Specie*, answerable to the Exigencies of their Condition, or the Quality of their Office. For the Clerks of an higher Station, and consequently charged with greater Labours, received (according to the precept of St. Paul) more liberal Allowances.

1 Tim. v.  
17.

Pont. Diac.  
Hortos.

Some there were also that kept their own temporal Estate, together with their Spiritual Dignity. St. Cyprian at the time of his Martyrdom, had still left him a little Country-Farm, the only Reserve he made to himself out of the vast Possessions he had quitted.

The Pastors and Clerks rendred themselves no less amiable by their Charity and their Application to the Services of Religion, than they were Venerable for other Excellencies. The Bishop dispensed not with himself from performing the Duties of his Place in Person; presiding always at the publick Prayers; Expounding the Holy Scriptures, and Offering the Sacrifice on all Sundays and Stationary Days. He and his Priests found themselves always fully Employed, and never

never wanted Work; to Instruct the *Catechumens*, Comfort the Sick, Exhort the Penitents, and Reconcile such as were at Variance: For to them it belonged to make up all Differences. They would by no means allow what St. Paul had expressly Forbidden, that Christians should bring their Causes before the Heathen Courts; and they that would not Submit to the Arbitration of the Bishops were Excommunicated for Impenitent and Incurable. But such Disputes could not often happen among Christians so Disinterested, so Humble, and Patient as they were. *Munday* was ordinarily the Day which the Bishop took to determine Differences; so that if the Parties should not readily Acquiesce in the Sentence, they might yet have time before them to Moderate matters and bring them to a Right understanding before the Sunday following; when they were all to meet again in the Church, and Pray and Communicate together. On the Day of Hearing, the Bishop seated in his Chair, the Priests sitting down by him, and the Deacons attending; the Parties Presented themselves before him, respectfully standing on their Legs, in the midst of the place of Audience. After having heard the Cause, he first did all that was possible to Reconcile them

Const. A.  
post. ii. c.  
xlv. 46, &c.  
1 Cor. vi.

V. Patres  
apud Baron  
an. lvii. n.  
37. 38, &c.  
Tertul. A-  
pol. c. xxxix.

them each other, and to perswade them to make up the Difference in a Friendly manner between themselves before he pronounced Sentence. At the same time also they heard Complaints and received Informations against Persons accused of not leading their Lives like Christians.

*Const. A-  
post. ii. c.  
xxiv. 25.*

The Bishop was fully entrusted with the Churches Treasure, all which lay absolutely at his Disposal. Nor were they under the least Apprehension of its being Misapplied. Had they had the least suspicion of his Integrity and Uprightness, they would never have committed to his Care the Government of Souls, a concern of Infinitely greater Moment than all Earthly Treasure. 'Twas to him therefore that all who stood in need of Relief, were to apply themselves. He was the Father of the Poor and the Refuge for all in Misery and Distress.

*Const. A-  
post. xli*

After all this what Wonder is it that their Prelates should be so beloved and Respected by the Faithful as they were? 'Tis observed of St. Polycarp that he had not for many Years together pulled off his own Shoes; the Faithful that were near him always offering themselves and Ambitiously Courting the Honour of that humble Office. So that he had not of a long time before done it with his own Hands, till at his Martyrdom, as he undrest

*Epist. Ec-  
cles. Smyrn.*

rest himself and prepared for the Stake. Their usual way of Approaching their Priest was to Prostrate themselves before them; Kiss their Feet, and in that Supplicating Posture crave their Blessing: And the first Words the Priest gave them were some short Prayers like the Collects of the Mass or Office. Happy was the Man that could have but so much as a Deacon lodging in his House, or eating at his Table. They never entred upon any Important Affair, with out taking the advice of the Pastor, who was the sole Director of his whole Flock. They looked upon him as a Man of God, and as the Vicegerent of Jesus Christ. So that they were not without some fears, upon the account of their Priests and Bishops, lest they should not be Able to withstand the great Temptation they lay under, of the Pride and contempt of others. They were apprehensive of the same Miscarriage in those that had the gift of Prophecy, or working Miracles; for these gifts were as yet common in the Church. 'Twas the filial Love and Respect, which their Flock bare to them that made their Pastors so well obeyed. For they had no other way of Commanding their Obedience but the methods of Perswasion, or Spiritual Penalties. They could use no other Constraint upon them

*Acta. S. S.  
Hippolyti,  
&c. Apud.  
Baron. an.  
259. n. viii.  
Acta. S.  
Sus. an.  
294. n. viii.  
10. 12.*

*Ignat. pas-  
sim in E-  
pist.*

*Const. A-  
post. viii. c. i.*

*Chrysost.  
Sacerd. lib.  
ii.*

then

then to overawe their Consciences ; and they who were Impious enough to despise their Censures, were in no danger of any Temporal Corrections.

XXVI.

The Discretion, & Patience of the Christians

THUS upon the matter the Christians Lived during the times of Paganism and Persecution. This condition obliged them for the most part to great Circumspection ; to be always waiting upon God, and watching over themselves. For when once the Persecution began, a Man had nothing else to expect but to be the next hour Impeached, even by his own Wife, or by his nearest Relation ; who either out of Covetousness to get his Estate, or out of a bigotted Zeal for their Idolatries, might be prompted to Betray them. This was a ready way for Debtors to get rid of their Creditors ; or Slaves, of their Masters. If a Pagan fell in Love with the Daughter of a Christian, he either put her upon the sad necessity of compliance or of exposing her self to Torment. St. *Justin* gives us an Instance of a Wife that was informed against, by her own Husband, only because she would no longer be a party to his Wickedness ; and of another who was put to Death Himself for daring to ask the Judge why he Sentenced another Man. (who was the Person had Con-

Martyr.  
xxx. Jul de  
S. Julitea.

Just. i. A-  
pol. init.

vert-

verted that Woman) Barely upon the name of a Christian, without any other Accusation, so much as pretended against him. Though the Church had its short Intervals of Peace, yet they were always in expectation of the War breaking out again. Nor was the Peace ever so entire ; but that in the most Quiet times, many Christians suffered either by Popular Commotions or other means. For we find a great number of Martyrs even under the Emperors who would not be engaged in Persecuting the Church. St. *Melito* complains to the Emperor *Antonine*, *Ap. Euseb. 4. Hist. xxvi.* that the Christians were without controul ; Robb'd and Plunder'd at Noon-day, under pretence of an Order from the Emperor when he knew nothing of the matter. Or if they did enjoy some little Respite from Persecution, and open Violence, yet they still were exposed to the utmost contempt and Hatred. Every one had the liberty of Speaking against the Christians, whatever he pleased, True or False ; of Discouraging and Writing against them, of Ridiculing and exposing them and their Religion, upon the open Theatre. All this was not only Connived at, but Authorised and Encouraged. And the passages of *Celsus* quoted by *Origen*, are sufficient proofs, with what Scorn they were Treated. They could

could not avoid seeing the profane Ceremonies of the *Pagans* every Day, meeting where ever they went, with their Infamous Statues and publick Places of Debauchery; having their Ears filled with their Lewd and Impious Discourses. The Christians of these times must of necessity have had a more then ordinary Strength, and firmness of Mind, in the Midst of so many Difficulties and Temptations to keep up their Faith and Practice so lively and Unexceptionable.

It required also a great Discretion to Moderate themselves, and to keep within due Bounds, that liberty of the Children of God, and that Boldness of Spirit which arises from the Testimony of a good Conscience. They knew how to Contemn, Contempt unjustly cast upon them, to bear the most Injurious Calumnies without quarreling; those that aspersed them without either hatred or Complaint. They were very cautious of doing any thing that might draw Persecution upon them. They Studied as far as was possible, and as much as in them lay, to Live Peaceably with all Men, and by well doing to put to Silence the Ignorance of Foolish Men. To this End they found it necessary to refrain from all things, (the Indispensable Duties of their Religion Excepted) which might give occasion of

1 Pet. ii. 16.

Rom. xii.

18.

1 Pet. ii.

15.

Offence to the Heathens, or Provoke their Displeasure; and on the contrary, to study all Honest means of obliging them. The Necessary Practices of a Christian Life, did sufficiently Distinguish them from the rest of the World, without their Affecting any Superfluous Singularities. So that as to their outward Form of Living, in all things not contrary to Piety and good manners, they conformed themselves to the Customs and Manners of the *Romans* or *Greeks*, or the People of the other Countrys, where they Lived. They never forced themselves upon Disputing or Preaching to those whom they found not Disposed to Regard them. They contented themselves with Praying for them, and strove to Edifye them by the Example of their Patience and good Works; never ceasing to return Good for Evil. St. *Ignatius* Speaking of the Soldiers who were his Keepers, *I am, saith he, Tied to ten Leopards, who are the Worse for being obliged.* But their Malice is my Instruction. St. *Polycarp* gave a friendly Welcome to those who came to Apprehend him; made them Sup and Lodge with him, and entertained them with all manner of Civility and Respect. St. *Cyprian* ordered twenty pieces of Gold to be given to the Executioner, that was to Strike off his Head. Another

Epist. ad Rom.

Epist. Eccles. Smyrn.

Martyr. vii. Sept. de. S. Enpsychio.

M

An-



Ancient Martyr, having been accused of being a Christian, and thereupon cast into Prison, upon his Discharge, Sold all that he had, and gave it part to the Poor, and part to his Enemies, as if they had been his Benefactors. Another being

xxv. Bul.  
de S. Paulo.

Condemned to lose his Head, desired some little time to Pray; which was granted, and he Pray'd to God for his Friends and Neighbours; for the *Jews*, for the *Gentiles*, for all the Spectators; and in the last place, for the Judge who had Condemned him, and the Executioner who was to give the Stroak.

But more remarkable was their Patience towards their Princes, Magistrates, and the secular Authority: They were never heard complaining against the Government, nor ever spake contemptuously of the Civil Power. They gave them all the honour and obedience they could on this side Idolatry; they paid their Tributes not only without resisting, but without repining; and rather then defraud them of their Rights, if they had not otherwise to answer; they made it up out of the labour of their Hands.

Tertul.  
Apol. c.  
xxxv, xxxvi  
xxxvii.

So far were they from raising Sedition or Rebellions, that in all the many Conspiracies which were formed against the Emperors, one after another, for the space of three hundred years, no Christian was ever

ever found to have had an Hand in any of them; tho' the Emperors were never so bad, and the Persecutors never so cruel. The Christians were the only Persons who did not make it their business to get rid of *Nero*, *Domitian*, *Commodus*, *Caracalla* and so many other Tyrants; Opprest, and Harrased as they were with all sorts of injuries, and groaning under the most unheard of Cruelties: Yet it never entered into their Thoughts to resist the Powers, or to take up Arms in their own Defence, though they were numerous enough to have made up a greater Body of Men, than any of the Nations could, that made War against the *Romans*: Nay, more than that of so many Christian Soldiers, with which the *Roman* Armies were filled; none ever made use of the Sword they had in their Hands, but to Execute the Orders of their Prince or their Commanders; and we read of entire Legions, (as that of *St. Mauritius*) that without the least resistance suffered themselves to be cut to pieces, rather than to fail of doing their Duty either to God or *Cesar*.

Scarce could they perswade themselves so much as to open their Mouths in their own Defence, and Publish some answers to those horrid Calumnies most wrongfully laid to their Charge. For near the space of an Age, they were content to

Orig. Cont.  
Cels. smt.

## The Behaviour and Manners

suffer with silence, after the Example of their Master, who answered nothing to his Accusers, but without resistance submitted himself to the unrighteous Judge. They were content to be justified by their works, and let their Actions plead their Cause. 'Twas not till the Emperor *Adrian*, that they began to Write some Apologies; but those in so respectful a manner, so Solid and so Grave, as made it plainly appear, that it was only Zeal for the Truth made them take Pen in Hand.

This invincible Patience at last surmounted all opposition, and forced the Powers of this World to submit to the Power of the Gospel. Even under the Persecutions, the number of Christians was grown prodigiously great. *We are* (saith *Tertullian*;) *but of Yesterday, and yet the World is filled with us; your Cities, your Houses, your Garrisons, your Villages, your Colonies, your very Camps, your Tribes, your Pallaces, your Senate, your Courts of Justice.* And indeed there were Christians of all Degrees, and some of the first Quality. We see in the Martyrology, Senators, Prefects, Proconsuls, Tribunes, Quæstors and even Consuls themselves; we find Christians in the Court, and among the Domesticks, and principal Officers of the Emperors, as under *Nero, Trajan, Alexander, Decius, Valerian, Diocle-*

v. 1 Pet. ii.  
21.

v. Euseb. iv.  
Hist. iii. c.  
xxv.

Apol. c.  
xxxvii.

Martyrol.  
18. Apr. x.  
Ec. 19 Ma.  
xix. Aug.  
xiii. Sept.  
viii. Oct.  
Martyrol.  
Martii. xii  
xxvi. Mai.  
xvii. xix.  
Jun. xx Jul.

*tian.* The Court of *Diocletian* served also sometimes for a safe retreat to the most Zealous Confessors of *Rome*. The Pope *St. Gains*, and *St. Gabinus*; the Father of *St. Susanna*, were his own Nephews; and *St. Serena* his Empress was a Martyr.

The People affected with these virtues of the Christians, and with the many Miracles wrought among them, began at length to do them Justice, loudly declaring that great was the God of the Christians, and that the Christians were Innocent Persons. It sometimes happened that as they were Tormenting the Martyrs, the common People themselves whom this sight had drawn together, took part with the Christians on their own accord, and Pelted the Magistrate with Stones off this Tribunal, and made him fly the Court. The Clerks of the Court, the Goalers, the Soldiers, the Executioners, were many times all on a sudden Converted; openly calling out that they were Christians too, and offering themselves to the same Punishments. Even *Comedians* themselves, as they were in Derision acting upon the Stage the sacred Mysteries, have been Converted on the spot, and made illustrious Martyrs. Hence proceeded the extream violence of the last Persecution. They saw the whole

M 3

World.

iii. Sept. v.  
Oct. xviii.  
Euseb. vi.  
Hist. xxviii.  
Act. S. Se-  
bast. & S.  
Susan.

Act. S. Bo-  
nifan. 305  
Martyrol.  
Jac. iii. Feb.  
xvi. xvii.  
xxvii. Mar.  
ix. xxvii.  
30. Mai.  
31. Jun. 30  
Jul. 7. Aug.  
21. Sept. 20  
25. Oct. 10.  
19. Nov.  
26. Dec. 3.

Martyrol.  
25. Aug. 15  
Sept.  
Baron. an.  
303. n. 118

World turning Christian: And this last Persecution also, as all the former had done, served only to spread it farther and give it the deeper Rooting: So that all the World bare a favourable Aspect toward Religion, when *Constantine* declared himself the Protector of it.

Part III.

XXVII.

The Church out of Persecution.

I AM now come to the third part of my Work, where I am to represent the Behaviour of the Christians, when the Church came to be in a state of Peace and Liberty. For three hundred years they had been longing and sighing after these happy Days of serving God without any lett or hindrance: But experience as sad as it was, taught them that Persecution was more for the advantage of Religion than Liberty: Not but that the same Manners before described, continued yet a long time after. So that I have nothing to do here but to observe those differences which the free exercise of Religion forthwith produced.

The Examination and Preparation for Baptism.

Though they had always used great care in Examining such as demanded Baptism; yet there was now required a far greater Circumspection, when there was no longer any danger to become a Christian: For Worldly Interest and diverse other bad Motives might make Men desirous of taking upon them that Name.

There.

Therefore every one that presented himself to Baptism, was in the first place taken into strict Examination, and obliged to give an account of the causes of his Conversion, of his Condition in the World; whether he was a Slave or a Freeman; of his Behaviour, and of his past Life. They who lived in any unlawful Calling, or in a customary way of Sinning, were not admitted till they had actually renounced that course of Life. Thus they rejected all common Women, and those that made a Trade of Prostituting their Bodies; Actors upon the Stage, Gladiators, Racers in the Circus, those whose Employment it was to Dance or Sing in Publick; in a Word, all retainers to the Theatre; all who had any part in, or were much addicted to the publick Shews; all Jugglers, Enchanters and Diviners of what sort soever; all dealers in Charms or Spells, used either by way of Cure or Preservative; all that exercised any sort of Heathenish Superstitions; none of these sort of People were received into the Church till they had first quitted their evil Practices; nor were their bare words taken for it, till they had given substantial Proofs of the sincerity of their Conversion, and that for some considerable time.

v. *Methodus* das *Pere.* c. iii. ix.

*Const. Ap.* viii. c. 32. *S. Aug.* xi. de *serm.* dom. in mont.

M 4

When



The Cate-  
chumens.

When a Person was judged duly qualified to become a *Christian*, he was made a *Catechumen*; which was done by the Imposition of Hands, either of the Bishop himself, or of some other Priest by him appointed to that Office, who at the same time, signed him with the sign of the Cross, and Prayed over him, That God would grant him the Grace to benefit by the Instructions should be given him, and to behave himself so as to be become fit to receive Holy Baptism. He continued two or three years in this State of a *Catechumen*, which is a kind of Probationership: He was present at the Publick Sermons of the Church; to which even the Infidels were admitted. But besides the publick Preaching, there was an Order of *Catechists*, whose proper business it was to inspect the *Catechumens*, and instruct them in the first Rudiments of Faith, without entering into deeper Mysteries, which these Novices were not yet judged able to bear. The time allowed for this institution of them, was longer or shorter, according to the Proficiency of the *Catechumen*; Nor did they regard only his understanding in the Doctrinals of Religion, but marked whether he mended his Manners; and they let him continue in this State, till they saw he was perfectly become a new Man. Hence it came

to

to pass that many deferred their Baptism till they were at the point of Death: For they never gave it but upon Desire, tho' they often exhorted People to ask it. They who desired Baptism, and were thought qualified at the beginning of *Lent*, gave in their Names to be entred in the Roll of *Competents* or Illuminated; for these *Competents* were distinguished from the other *Catechumens*: They fasted the forty Days as the rest of the Faithful; and then they were more fully instructed, and the Creed was explained to them, and particularly the Mysteries of the *Trinity* and the Incarnation. They were from time to time brought to the Church, to be there publicly examined in the presence of the Faithful, to have the Exorcisms made over them, and the Prayers of the Church on their behalf: This is it they call the Scrutiny, which continued to be observ'd for many Ages; even toward little Children; and some traces of it appear still in the Office of the Church. At the end of *Lent*, they were taught the Lord's Prayer and well informed of the Nature of the Sacraments they were then about to receive; which were afterward to be explicated to them more at large. This order of Instruction plainly appears in the Catechisms of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and in one of Fulgentius's Sermons.

Tertul. de  
penit. init.  
Hier. ad  
vers. Jo.  
Hier.  
Photizom-  
eni.

v. Cod Sa-  
cram. edit.  
Rom. 1680.  
ord. Rom.  
Miss. Fer.  
iv. post. Do-  
min. iv.  
Quadrages.  
ibi. durand

Fulg. Serm

After 78.

After all these Preparations, they were at last solemnly Baptized; either on *Easter-Eve*, to put them in mind of rising up with Christ to newness of Life: or on the *Eve of Pentecost*, that they might then with the Apostles receive the Gift of the Holy-Ghost: For at the same time that they received Baptism, they had Confirmation also. Baptism was regularly Administred only upon those two Feasts; but in case of danger, they Baptized at any time. The new Baptized, of what Age soever they were, were called by the name of Children. They wore during the whole first Week the white Robe they had received at their Baptism, in token of the Innocence wherein they were to walk all the Days of their Life: Nor might they during that time, wash themselves in any of the ordinary Baths. From that time forward they were freely admitted to all the parts of the Church service.

*Tertul. de  
cor. c.iii.*

*Eus. Hist.  
c. iii.*

*Constantine* having put an end to the Persecution, one might have seen (as *Eusebius* relates it) in all Parts of the World Dedications of Churches, and Assemblies of Bishops. The dispersed Christians now meet together again. The Churches were now in all places frequented more than ever: The *Psalmody*, the Celebration of the Myseries, and all the Ceremonies of Religion were performed with greater Solemn-

Solemnity then ever: So that this is the proper place to speak of their outward form of Worship. Let us begin with the Description of the ancient Churches; according to the best Account we can gather both out of the oldest Writings, and the oldest Buildings that are left us.

THE Church was separated as much as possibly they could, from all profane Buildings, and placed at a distance from noise; surrouded on every side with Courts, Gardens, or Buildings belonging to the Church. At the first enterance, you saw the Porch or outer *Vestibulum*, which led you into the *Peristilium* or Square Court, surrounded with covered Galleries standing upon Pillars; such as the Cloysters of our Monasteries are at this Day: Under these Galleries stood the Poor, that were permitted to Beg at the Door of the Church; and in the middle of the Court were several Fountains for them to wash their Hands and Faces at, before Prayers; in the room of these Fountains, succeeded afterward the Holy-Water Pots. At the farther end of this Court, was a double Porch; and through it there was a passage by three Doors into the Hall or *Basilique*, which was the Body of the Church. I call it Double, because there was one without, and another

XXVIII  
The form  
of the  
Churches  
& their or-  
naments.

*v. Euseb.  
Hist. Eccl.  
x. c. iv. de  
vita Const.  
lib. iii. cap.  
34, 35, &c.  
o lib. iv. c.  
58.  
Propylaum  
Paulin. ep.  
xii & Na-  
tal. x.  
S. Greg. iv.  
Dialog. c.  
xiv.*

ther within, which the *Greeks* called the *Narthex*. Near the *Basilique* on the inside, were generally two Buildings; the *Baptistery* at the Entry; and at the other end the *Sacristy* or *Treasury*, called also the *Secretarium* or *Diaconium*. Along the sides of the Church, were often placed little Chambers or Cells, for the convenience of them that had a mind to retire, and meditate or Pray by themselves: So that they were in effect, so many little Chappels.

The *Basilique* or Church was Parted into three Divisions, proportionable to its Largeness, by two rows of Pillars supporting the Galleries on each side, and the Middle between these Galleries was the *Nave*, as we see it in all Old Churches. Toward the East end was the *Altar*; and behind that, the *Presbytery* or *Sanctuary*, where the Priests sat in time of Divine Service, with their Bishop in the Middle of them, whose Chair was at the very end of the *Basilique*, and terminated the prospect of them that came in at the principal Door. There was before the *Altar*, a Partition enclosed within Balusters, which we may call the *Choir* or *Chancel*; and in the Middle of the Entrance into it, stood the *Pulpit* or *Ambo* for the Reading the publick lessons; which was a kind of Tribunal Seat, Erected on high

Celle.

Exhedra.

Cancelli.

a-

above the rest of the Congregation, and had a pair of By-Staires on each side. Sometimes they made two of these Pulpits, over against one another, with a little void Space between them, so as to leave the Middle open, that the *Altar* might not be out of Sight. On the right Hand of the Bishop and the left of the People stood the *Desk* for the Gospel; and on the other side, that for the Epistle. Behind the *Pulpit*, up to the *Altar*, was the place for the Singing Men; who were Clerks also, but Ordained only to this Office.

The *Altar* was a rich Table of Gold or Silver, Ornamented with precious Stones. It was at worst of Marble or Porphyry, for they thought they could never employ matter good enough for the bearing of the Holy of Holies; and the Ceremonies they used in the Consecration of Altars, sufficiently declare in what Veneration they held them. The Holy Table was always kept uncovered, but at the time of the Sacrifice. It stood upon four Feet, or little Pillars as rich in proportion as the Table its self, and it was Placed, if possible, over the Grave of some Martyr. For as they had been formerly accustomed to meet at their Tombs, so now they built their Churches there, or else Translated their Bodies to the Places where they built them: And thence it came to be a

Defer. S.  
Mar. Mai.

red



Baron. in  
Martyr. 6.  
Ful.

ted Rule, never to Consecrate an Altar without putting Reliques under it. And these Tombs of the Saints they called *Memoria* or Confessions. They were layd under Ground, and there was a way down to them, opening before the Altar, which stood directly over them. There was nothing standing immediately upon the Altar it self, but it was surrounded with four Pillars at the four corners of it, Supporting a kind of Tabernacle, that covered the whole Compass of the Altar, and was called the *Cupelo* from its resembling in figure a *Cup revers't*.

Behind the Altar (as I said before) was the place for the Priests. And here the roof was built lower than the rest of the Church, and was called the *Concha*, as being in the form of a *Scallop-shell*, or the *Abfis* from the Arch, with which the Front of it was Terminated. This end of the Church was also called the Tribunal, because in the Heathen Palaces it was the place where the Magistrate, with his Officers about him sat in Judicature. This part of the Church was raised somewhat higher than the rest, so that the Bishop came down some steps from thence to the Altar.

Ordo Rom.

All this was set off with Magnificent Ornaments. The *Cupelo*, and the Pillars that sustained it, were often all of Silver;

Silver; some of them weighed three thousand Marks. Between these Pillars hung Curtains of the Richest Stuff, drawn on all sides to keep the Altar from being seen. The *Cupelo* was adorned with several Images and other pieces of Art wrought in Gold or Silver, and the top of it was made in Resemblance of the Cross. There were hanging also over the Altar, Gold or Silver Doves, to Represent the Holy Ghost: Here some times they laid up the Eucharist for the Sick, and sometimes kept it in plain Boxes like our *Pixes*. Sometimes the whole *Abfis* was all overlaid with Silver, or at least faced with Marble, as was also the *Concha*. The Pillars that Supported the Church were of Marble, with Capitals of Brass gilt with Gold. It was Paved with Marble, and many times the inside of the Walls was Rough cast with polished Stones.

They most affected in their Churches (especially in the following Ages) the *Mosaick-work*, which is a kind of inlaying with little peices of Glass, painted with divers Colours; and thus they could make all sorts of Figures, that would never fade or decay. Not but that these Churches had other sorts of Paintings besides this. Their Walls were all covered with them: There were to be seen on them divers

Anast. in  
Silvest. &  
in Leon. iii.  
&c.  
Id. in  
Steph. iv.

Conc. Con-  
stantin. an.  
536. Art. v.

Opus Mu-  
sivum.

v. Roma  
Subterr. lib.  
iv cap. 6. 7.  
&c.

Hif.

Histories of the old Testament, and more especially such as were Types of the Mysteries of the New; As *Noah's Ark*, *Abraham's Sacrifice*, *the passage thorough the red Sea*, *Jonas cast into the Sea*, *Daniel among the Lions*. Our Saviours Picture was in several places of the Church, and the representation of some of his Miracles, as the *Multiplication of the Loaves*, the *Resurrection of Lazarus*. *Eusebius* assures us,

*Euseb. vii. Hist. c. 18.*

That from the very first times there were some who had the Pictures of *St. Peter*, *St. Paul*, and our Saviour himself drawn in Colours. The way of Honouring Benefactors by preserving their Pictures, having been (as he observes) a custome of a long standing in the World; besides this, every Church had in particular, painted upon its Walls the History of the Martyr, whose Reliques were thereunder deposited; of which *Prudentius* gives us two lively Representations in the Examples of *St. Cassian* and *St. Hippolytus*.

*Prud. Peristeph. ix. de S. Cass. ibid xi. de S. Hippoli.*

These Paintings were designed chiefly for the use of the more Ignorant; to whom they served instead of Books, as *Pope Gregory* the second Argues on their behalf, in his Epistle to the Emperor *Leo*.

*Greg. ii. ep. i. in Conc. Nic. iii.*

The Author of the opinion of the Iconoclasts, *Men and Women* (saith he) *holding in their Arms their New Baptized Children, point out to them those Painted Histories, shew-*

*shew them to other young People, or to the Gentile Strangers; and thus they Instruct and edify them, and raise up their Thoughts and Hearts to God.* The Doors of the Church were adorned with Ivory, Silver or Gold, and were always furnished with Curtains. At the Principal Gates were placed some Reliques: And that's the Reason why the faithful always expressed some particular marks of respect upon their entering in at the Doors of the Church.

*Hieron. ad Demetr. Paul. Natal. iii. and vi. Anast. in Leon. iii. Baron. ad marty. xviii Nov.*

The *Diaconicum*, or *Sacristy* was a considerable building adjoining to the Church. It was the Repository for the Consecrated Vessels; the Books, the Habits of the Priests, and the other choicest Furniture of the Church. The Oblations of the faithful were also kept there, and sometime the Eucharist. There it was that the Bishop and his Clergy usually met to consult together about the affairs of the Church, or to prepare themselves for the Sacrifice. As it was *St. Martin's* Custom to pass three Hours in praying by himself in the Sacristy before Mass. And from this use of it, we find it took the name of *Secretarium*: Some of them were so spacious that Councils have been held in them. None but Persons in holy Orders might go into them, or touch the Consecrated Vessels. In some Churches there

*Sever. de vita S. Mart.*

*Conc. Carthag. Con. Agath. can 66.*

*Paul. ep. xii.* were two different Apartments for these two several uses, one to lock up the Consecrated Vessels in, and the other for the Ministers to retire into and meditate there or to meet together and Consult.

They had a great number of *Calices* and *Patins*, which in the first times were often of no better Materials than Glass; but sometimes also of Silver or Gold, even during the Persecutions. Their *Calices* were like the ordinary drinking Cups among the *Romans*, as their *Patins*, the Dishes in which they served up their Meats to Table. The *Calices* of the Church were generally of about the weight of three \* Marks, but their *Patins* were large deep Dishes weighing some of them forty five Marks, but commonly about thirty: 'Twas in these times that they brought into the Church the use of Wax Tapers, great numbers of 'em always kept burning together, and that even at Noon-day, and at the same time also many lighted Lamps: Light and Fire were the old Symbols of Joy. They carried Fire before the *Roman* Magistrates: *Horace* to Redicule the vanity of the *Prætor* of the little Town of *Fundi*, very pleasantly describes him with his Chaffing-Dish of Coals carried before him. And the *Notitia Imperii* informs us that among the other Badges of Honour, generally be-  
long-

*Lib. Pont.  
in Mar. &  
alibi pas-  
sim lib. 30  
lib. 20.*

\* A Mark  
weighs 8  
Ounces.

*V. Hier. in  
Vigilant. c.  
iii.*

*Præneque  
batillum.  
1 Sat. v.*

longing to the principal Officers of State, there was a Table had upon it a Book lying on a Cushion; sometimes covered over with a large Veil, sometimes uncovered, and two Candlesticks standing by with lighted Tapers in them; which nearly resembles our Altars. We find that there were in the Primitive times Golden Candlesticks of thirty seven Marks weight a peice, and Silver ones of forty five given to some Churches: And in the Provinces we find also mention made of perfumed Tapers, as at the Baptism of *Clovis*.

The Baptistry was generally built in a round form, having within it a place sunk into the Ground (after the manner of a Well) with some steps down to the Water: For indeed it was properly a Bath. In After-times they contented themselves with a large *Cistern* of Marble or Porphyry, as a kind of *Baignoire*, and at last they reduced it to a large *Bason* much like our present *Fonts*. The *Baptistry* was always beautified with Paintings agreeable to that Sacrament, and furnished with a great deal of Gold and Silver Plate to keep both the Consecrated Oyls in, and the Water: These were often made in the form of Lambs or Harts, to represent the Lamb of God, by whose Blood we are washed, and to signify the longings of devout Souls after God, as to  
use

*Anastas in  
Sylvestr.  
Greg. Tur.  
lib. ii.*

*Paulin. ep.  
xii.  
Lib. Pont.  
in Innoc. i.  
& at Psal.  
xlii. 1.*

use the Expression of the *Psalmist*, *The thirsty Hart panteth after the Water Brook*. There was also to be seen the Image of *St. John Baptist*, and a Gold or Silver Dove hovering over the sacred *Bagnio*, to represent to the Eye the History of the Baptism of Jesus Christ, and the Power of the holy Ghost descending upon the Baptismal Water; and in allusion to the same History, we find the *Font* called by the name of the *Jordan*.

Conc. Constantin. an.  
535.

Much after this manner (generally Speaking) did the Ancients Contrive their Churches, and the buildings belonging to them; not to speak here of the Bishops House and the Lodgings for his Clergy, whence came in after Ages the Cloisters of the Cannons; nor to mention the Hospitals of divers sorts, which were commonly seated near the principal Church.

In the mean time, the *Gentiles* upbraided the *Christians* for having neither Temples, nor Altars, nor Images, nor Sacrifices, nor Feasts. To which the *Christians* made no other answer, but that neither Temples, nor material Altars, nor Bloody Sacrifices were worthy of the Majesty of God: That God could have no other Image but his own Son, and reasonable Souls, who by Imitating the Son rendred themselves like unto the Father

Orig. in  
Cels. lib.  
viii.

ther. That they did at all times, and in all places offer up to God the Sacrifice of Praise, upon the Altars of their Hearts; burning with the fire of Charity. In fine that the true *Christians* do keep every Day a Feast, by their disengagement from the Affairs of this World; by the rest of a good Conscience, and their Rejoycings in the hope of Heaven. This was the Defence the *Christians* made for themselves against the reproaches of the *Heathens*. They did not pretend to say, we have Temples and Altars as well as you, though not of the same form and Figure.

To have said so, would have given the *Heathens* quite different Conceptions concerning our Religion, from what it is in Reality. An Altar with them, was a Fire-hearth of Stone Erected either before some Idol or before some Temple, but always in the open Air, designed for the Burning of their Victims, and to pour Wine, Milk, Honey or other sort of Libations upon it. A Temple was a round or oblong Building, where the Bigness, Figure and Proportion were particular according to the different Divinities to which they were Consecrated; as one may see in *Vitruvius*. They were for the most part of small Extent, made without Windows, or at least admitting little Light; nor did they contain any thing

in them, but the Idols and things offered to them. The People never entered them, but remained without Surrounding the Altar.

*Vitruv. lib.  
v. c. i.*

*Baron. ad  
Martyr. v.  
Aug.*

Our Churches were more like the publick Schools, or Town-Halls designed for business, which the Ancients called *Basilica*; and the Description of them is also given us by *Vitruvius*. They saw in our Churches a Tribunal raised up on High, with a Chair for him that Presided in the Assembly, a Desk for the Reader, Benches for the Auditors; Books, Presses, Lamps and Candlesticks; and amongst other things a Table, the use of which, they that were Strangers to our Religion could not tell what to make of; only concluding in general, that it was for taking some kind of Repast upon among our selves. The Christians did not agree in the same Names with the Heathens. They gave to the places of their publick Assembly, the Name of *Ecclesia*, *Basilica*, *O-ratorie*, *Martyriam*, *Titulus*, the House of God, or the House of the Lord; they rarely made use of the name of *Temple*, and never (within the Compas of my reading) of *Delubrum* or *Fanum*. The names of Particular Churches were often taken from their Founders, as at *Rome*, the *Titulus Pastoris*, the *Basilica of Liberius* or *Sixtus*, which is now *St. Mary the great*;

great; or from the Ancient Name of the House, as *Basilica Laterana*. Afterwards they came also to make use of Churches built by the Heathens; when they found them fit for the use of Religion. So in *Rome* they Converted the *Pantheon*, the Temple of *Minerva*, of *Fortuna Virilis* with some others into Christian Churches.

The Churches were not only large and Beautiful as to the make of them, but also looked after with great care, and always kept Neat and Clean. *St. Jerome* gives a special Commendation of *Ne-potian* the Priest, for the care he took of, keeping his Church in good order: The Walls dry and free from Smut and Mould; the Pavements rubbed, the *Sacristy* clean, the Vessels shining, the Door-keeper always upon his Office. This was the business of the inferior Officers, under what Name soever they went, as *Door-keepers*, *Mansionaries*, *Camerarii*, *Sacristans*; and there was a great number of these Officers in the larger Churches. We may see yet in the form of Ordination what was the proper charge of the *Ostiaries*. They were at the Regular Hours to give notice for Prayers, and consequently it belonged to them to Ring the Bells, when once the use of Bells was brought into the Church, which was about the seventh Age. It was their business to open the

*Epist. de  
fun. Nejat.*

*Cubiculari  
Aditui.  
Pontific.  
Rom.  
V. Baron.  
an. lviii. n.  
102.*



Dial. i. c.  
v. & iii.  
c. xxiv.  
Paul. Nat.  
iii. & vi.

Church Doors at the usual time, and to stand at them upon their Duty, to keep Infidels or Excommunicated Persons from Entering. They kept the Keys, and took care that nothing was lost. We find in the Dialogues of St. Gregory that the *Mansionaries* had the charge of the Lamps. 'Twas these Inferior Officers that Dress'd up the Church against the more solemn Festivals, either with Silk Tapestries or other rich Hangings, or only with Boughs and Flowers. In a Word, they were to do every thing that was necessary to keep the Holy Place fit for making Impressions of Reverence and Piety upon those who approached it. All these Functions appeared too Considerable to be permitted to pure Laicks. So that 'twas thought necessary to Establish these new Orders of Minor Clerks on purpose to ease the Deacons, and to take off some part of their Charge.

XXIX.

Devotion  
assisted by  
Sense.

THOUGH t's true, the Christian Religion is altogether Inward and Spiritual; yet Christians are Men as well as others, and therefore not above the power of Sense and Imagination. Nay, we may say that the greatest part of Man-kind scarce Act or Live upon any other Principle. How few apply themselves to Operations purely Intellectual; and they that

that do so, find their thoughts easily Diverted from Spiritual Objects. Devotion therefore must be assisted by the Impressions of Sense. Were we Angels, we might Pray in all places alike, in the hurry of the Roads, in the Crowd of the Streets, in the Noise of the Guard-Chamber, in the Roaring and Riots of a Tavern; over the Stenches of a Common-Shore. Why then do we shun these places of Distraction; and when we would be Devout, seek after Silence and retiredness, but only as a Remedy against the Impotence of Sense and Imagination? 'Tis not God that hath need of *Temples* and *Oratories*, but We. He is equally present in all Places, and always equally ready to hear us everywhere, but we are not always in a frame of Spirit fit to Speak to him. So that 'tis a needless and useless peice of Work to Consecrate particular places to his Service, unless they be also put into a Condition proper to assist our Devotion.

Let us Suppose for Example, that which we see too often in these later Times, a Church so ill Scituated, that it Ecchoes with the Noises of an Adjacent Street or a Neighbouring Market; and so nastily kept that one can scarce sit down or kneel in it for Dirt; suppose it throng'd with such a Herd of People promiscuously crow-



crowded together, that, they who attend upon Prayer, are every Moment jostled and trampled upon by others pushing on their way through them, and continually interrupted with Children's Crying or Playing, Loud Beggars Bawling about their Ears: Add to this, that you have nothing before your Eyes but disagreeable Objects, the Walls covered over with a filthy Smut and Mouldiness, the Pictures disfigur'd with Dust and Cobwebbs, and placed in an ill Light; the statues of a deformed Make, or half of them broken off, and the other Ornaments in as ill a condition. In fine, to omit nothing offensive to sense; for Incense an horrid fume of stinking Vapours; and for Musick, a multitude of untuned Voices jumbled together in Croaking Sounds: It will be much easier for a Man to Pray in an open Field, or in a lone uninhabited House than in such a Church as this. On the contrary, let a Man go into a Church well built, beautifully adorned, and neatly Kept; where all things are still and quiet, the People well placed, and the Clergy performing the Office in a regular manner, and with a becoming Reverence and Humility; he will find himself insensibly Engaged to attend the Service he is upon with a composedness of Thought, and be able

able to Pray with the Heart at the same time he speaks with his Lips. 1 Cor. xiv. 14.

Of this the Bishops of the First Ages were very sensible. Those Holy Persons were either *Greeks* or *Romans*, many of them great Philosophers, all of them train'd up in the nicest observance of all the Rules of Decency. They knew that the order, Grandeur and agreeableness of exterior Objects, have a natural Efficacy in them of exciting in the mind Noble, pure, and well regulated Thoughts; and that the Affections follow those Thoughts: But that 'tis next to impossible to keep the Soul Intent upon that which is good, while the Body is uneasy or the Imagination disobliged: They thought Devotion a matter of that Importance that it required all the assistance which could handsomely be given it; and therefore took care to have the publick Services of the Church, especially that of the Sacrifice, Celebrated with all possible Majesty, and the People assisting at it, accommodated with all imaginable Conveniencies, that so they might be brought on to take delight in the House of Prayer and to approach it with Reverence. And they were at the same time sufficiently Cautious also to keep out of the Holy Places, all the Extravagances of a Worldly Pomp; all the appearances of a wanton Vanity, or what

whatsoever might have a tendency to Effeminate the mind or strike the Senses with dangerous Impressions. 'Twas not their design to Flatter Sense, but to assist it. This will better appear in describing the whole Form and Manner of their Outward Worship.

XXX:

Their Liturgy and outward Form of Worship. V.S. Epiph. bares in fi. Bonai. Liturg. c. xviii

THEY offered the Sacrifice every Sunday, on all the Feasts of the Martyrs, on all Fast Days, or oftner as the Custom of every Church in particular required. They had also both upon Publick and Private occasions, their *Votive Masses*; Sometimes they had many *Masses* on the same Day, as when the Office of a Saint fell upon some other Festival, or when there was a Burial. It was always either the Bishop himself, or one and the same Priest that performed them all; as it is still observed by us on Christmas-Day. On Sundays and the other Festivals, Mass was said about nine or ten of the Clock in the Morning; on Fast Days later, for they were not to eat on those Days till after Evening Service, past three of the Clock in the Afternoon. The Hour being come, the People met together at the principal Church, to attend the Bishop with all his Clergy to the place where the Station for that Day was appointed. And after this manner the Bishop took his round

V. Cod. Sacram. edit. Rom. 1680.

V. Ord. Ro.

round, and visited all his Churches one by one, every one in its Course: And that this Progress might be orderly made, and in a full Body, Processions were Instituted.

As they were entering the Church and taking their places, the *Choir* sung a Psalm with its Anthem; which from thence took its name of the *Introit*. The Deacons and their assistants, the Subdeacons and Door keepers gave every one his place in order as they came; so that all was done without any thing of Confusion; being all seated there, they prayed for some time in Silence, every Man to himself; then the Bishop Saluted the People, and put an end to their private Prayers, Pronouncing with a lowd Voice his publick Prayer, which from thence took its name of the *Collect*. *Const. Ap. ii. c. lvii.*

Then the Bishop seated himself on his Throne that stood at the very end of the Church, and terminated the prospect of the whole Congregation. Thus every Bishop was as it were the visible Image of God in his Church, placed there eminently, as St. Paul expresses it, to be the pattern to his own Flock, as Jesus Christ was to him. The Priests were seated on each side about him, some on the right hand, and others on the left, in the Semicircle of the *Abfis*; and next to them stood the Deacons: Thus the Church seemed to re-

1 Cor. xi. 1.  
1 Tim. iv. 12.  
Tit. ii. 7.

*Apoc. iv.* resemble that Image of Paradise given us by St. John in the *Apocalypse*.

The Bishop on his Throne with a Book in his Hand, as the Fathers are commonly painted, represented that Figure of a Man under which God appeared; the Priests were that August Senate designed by the four and twenty Elders; the Deacons and other Officers were the Angels standing always in a readiness to receive and execute the Orders of God. Before the Bishops Throne stood seven Candlesticks, and the Altar on which they offered the Incence (that Symbol of Prayer) where they were afterward, tho' under a borrowed form, to offer the unspotted Lamb of God. Under the same Altar were the Bodies of the Martyrs, as under that St. John saw were the Souls of those to whom it was said, *That they should rest yet for a little Season*. And lastly, the number of the Faithful which filled the other part of the Church, represented the innumerable Multitude of the Blessed, who being Clothed in white Robes, and with Palms in their Hands, sung with a loud Voice the Praises of their Maker: Such was the Face then of their Church-Assemblies.

The whole Congregation being seated, the Reader went up to the Desk and read a Lesson, first out of the Old-Testament, and

and after that another out of the new; that is, out of the Acts or Epistles of the Apostles; for the reading of the Gospel was reserved to some Priest or Deacon. To render these Lessons the more agreeable, and to give the People leisure to meditate upon them, and the Readers some respite, there were intermingled with them Psalms, Anthems, and the singing of Allelujas; which were afterwards placed before the Gospel. All these Lessons of the Scripture, were read in the vulgar Language; that is, in the Language spoken by the better sort of People in every Country: For though in *Africa* the *Punick* Language was vulgarly spoken among the inferior sort of People in the time of St. *Austin*; yet we do not find that it was used in the Church. But in *Thebais* the Scriptures must needs have been read in the *Aegyptian* Language since St. *Antony*, *Vi. S. Ant. c. i.* who understood no other, was converted by his having heard the Gospel read in the Church. In the upper *Syria*, the greatest part of the Bishops understood nothing of *Greek*, nor of any other Language but the *Syriack*, as it appears by the Councils, where they were forced to make use of Interpreters. *Concil. eph. Concil. Cal. ced. Act. x.*

AFTER

XXXI.  
Their Ser-  
mon.

AFTER the Lessons, the Sermon begun, the Bishop Expounded the Gospel or some other part of Scripture, and often continued a course of Expositions upon some entire Book of the Bible, from the beginning to the end, or else passing over some part of it, he made choice of the most important Subjects. Of these continued Expositions we have Examples in many of *St. Chrysostom's* Homilies, in *St. Austin* upon the Psalms, upon *St. John*, and upon the Epistles of *St. Paul*. In *St. Ambrose* we have a selected Argument, which begins with the six Days work, in imitation of *St. Basil*; then the Exposition proceeds to the History of *Noah*, *Abraham*, and the other more Illustrious Saints of the Old Testament; but still observing the Order of the Holy Bible. The greatest part of those Tracts and Commentaries of the Fathers upon the Scriptures are nothing else but Sermons preached to their People; which they afterward reduced into Form, or were taken down in Writing as they spake them by the Art of Short Hand before mentioned.

These holy Preachers were none of your idle Haranguers, like the *Sophists* of the Profane Schools, who filled the World with endless disputes only out of a vain Emulation of Contradicting and refining upon each others Notions; or like those who

who laboured in their Closet to shew their Learning and fine Parts: These Prelates were laborious Pastors, who had always their Hands full of business, and were too intent upon the works of Charity, to spend all their time in their Studies; and they were principally employed upon that necessary Office of reconciling Differences and making up the Breaches of Friends. Yet did they not suffer their other Engagements to take them off from Preaching, and that very often too; as thinking that they could not otherwise discharge the Duty of their Place, and looking upon the work of Preaching as one of the most Essential parts of their Ministry: For in the first Age all Bishops were Preachers, and scarce were there any other Preachers besides them. 'Twas in the *East* they first began to make here, and there, a Priest of an extraordinary Talent, a Preacher, as *Origen*; nay, and sometimes the Laicks themselves, when they found them very understanding Men. We find also in the *West*, during the Persecutions, that *St. Felix*, though no more then a Priest, was a Preacher at *Nola*. But these Examples were so unfrequent, that many have taken *St. John Chrysostome* and *St. Austin* to have been the first Priests, to whom the Bishops entrusted this Ministry.

O

Hence

Hence it is that our Modern Preachers find the Sermons of the Fathers so different from that Idea of Preaching which they have formed to themselves. Their Discourses are plain, without any appearance of Art, without the exactness of Method, without the subtilties of Ratiocination, without the curiosity of Learning; nay, some of them without any Pathos, and the greatest part of them very short. And 'tis true, these holy Bishops did not set up for Oratory and Harranguing: They pretended to no more than to instruct their People in a plain and Familiar way, as Parents speak to their Children, or Masters to their Scholars. And therefore their Pulpit Discourses were called in *Latin*, *Sermons*, and in *Greek*, *Homilies*, which words note such kind of Discourse as is used in common Conversation. Their business in expounding the Scripture, was to handle it after such a manner as might prove most to the edification of their Hearers; so that they did not pretend to examin every Word and Phrase with the exactness of a Critick, or to Launch out into curious Enquiries, as the Grammarians explained *Homer* and *Virgil* in their Schools. They expounded the Scriptures according to the Tradition of the Fathers; so as they might tend most to the Confirmation of Faith, and the Reformation of Man-

Manners. They endeavoured to work upon the Affections, not so much by the vehemence of Figures and the force of Declamation, as by the weight and Importance of the Truths they delivered, by the Authority of their Office, by the Sanctity of their Lives and the Exemplariness of their good Works.

As for their Stile, That they suited to the capacity of their hearers. The Sermons of *St. Austin* are the plainest of all his Works; the Stile of them is much shorter and much easier than that of his Epistles; because he Preached in a little City to Labourers, Traders, and Seamen; but in his Tracts of Controversy, especially in his Books against *Julian*, one may see that he had not forgot his Art of Rhetorick, which he was Professor of for so long a time: On the contrary, *St. Cyprian*, *St. Ambrose*, and *St. Leo*, who preached in great Cities, delivered themselves with more of pomp and Ornament. Yet their styles vary according to the Particularity of their Genius, or the relish of the Ages they lived in. But we must observe that the faults with which the modern Humanists reproach the Fathers, are not to be attributed to the subject of Religion. These Criticks charge the Fathers with Impropriety of Language; making use of feeble Arguments, poor

Ornaments, farfetch'd Allegories, playing with Words, and Chiming of Syllables. These were the faults of the Age, not of the Men. Had they lived in the Age of *Cicero* or *Terence*, they had spoken as *Cicero* and *Terence*.

The Greek Fathers come nearer to the Ancient Authors. Language had not undergone so great a change in the East, nor had the Studies of Polite Learning been there so much neglected. The works of these Fathers are for the most part very Solid and very entertaining: And among the rest *St. John Chrysostom* is to my thinking, the compleat Pattern of a Preacher. His usual method was to begin with explaining the Scripture, verse by verse as pronounced by the Reader, keeping himself always to the most literal Sense, and that which most tended to Practice. He concluded with a general Exhortation, which hath many times little relation to the foregoing part of his Discourse, but was proportioned to the present Exigencies of his Flock, and directly applyed to his Auditors themselves, as so prudent and vigilant a Pastor saw their Case required. We may observe also that it was his way to encounter Vices Singly, one by one, and when he began with any one, he never gave over the Pursuit till it was either enti-

entirely Routed, or at least very much disabled.

These Holy Preachers did not propose either Fame or Profit to themselves by Preaching, but the Conversion of their Hearers. That was the only thing they aimed at, and that they pursued with all their Might, and never thought they had done enough till they had effectually wrought the Change they desired. Thus *St. Austin*, undertook to abolish the Practice Epist. xxix. his People had taken up of making entertainments, on the Feasts of the Martyrs, which were degenerated into Debauches; but notwithstanding the strength and prevalence of the custome, he broke it off. He shewed the People the Evil of that Practice, from expresse Texts of Scripture condemning the sinfulness of immoderate Eating and Drinking, and with Tears in his Eyes exhorted and intreated for two Days together till he had effectually prevailed. There was no danger then of having different Doctrines taught in one and the same Church, for there was no other Preacher or Teacher, but the Bishop himself, or some Priest chosen by him, who Preached there only by his appointment, and generally in his presence.

In Sermon time the Church was open to all comers, even to the Infidels: Which Meth. des  
Potes c. xii is the reason that the Fathers were so



cautious in keeping the Mysteries Secret to themselves, never speaking of them from the Pulpit, save only in an Ænigmatical way. Hence also it is that we often find in their Sermons some part of the Discourse directed to the Heathens to draw them to the Faith. During the time of the Lessons and Sermon the Audience were regularly seated, the Men on one side of the Church and the Women on the other; and to be separate and at a greater distance from the rest of the Congregation, the Women went up into the Galleries where there were any. The more elderly Persons sat in the uppermost Seats; their Fathers or Mothers held the little Children before them; for they carried them to Church with them, provided they were Baptized. When all the seats were filled, the younger People continued standing on their Feet. There were Deacons appointed on purpose to see this order observed, and to take care that every one heard with attention, not to suffer any body to Sleep, Laugh, Whisper or make Signes; in a Word, to keep every body silent, Regular and Well behaved. In *Africa* St. *Austin* takes notice that the People *Stood* all Sermon time, but he himself better approved the custom of the Transmarine Churches, as he calls them, where they *Heard, Sitting*.

*Const. Ap.  
ii. c. lvii.*

*August. de  
Catechiz.  
rud. c. xxiii.*

The

The Sermon being over, the Deacons obliged all those who were not to receive the Sacrament to depart. And in the first place the Audientes and Infidels: Afterwards they made their Prayers for the Catechumens, and caused them to depart; then they Prayed for the *Energumeni*, or those that were Possessed with Evil Spirits, and caused them to go out; after that they did the like for the Competentes, and at last also for those under Penance. Thus there remaining in the Church only the Faithful without any mixture, they made their Prayers for the whole state of Christ's Church; for all Orders and conditions of Men whether Ecclesiastical or Civil; for all that were any ways Afflicted or Distressed; for their Enemies, and for their Persecutors. The Deacon put them in mind whom they were then to Pray for, and the Bishop pronounced the Words of Prayer, after the same form and manner as is still observed in our Churches on Good-friday. At other Masses we now supply these Prayers by those of the *Prone*. Then the Bishop Saluted the People again, and the Deacon said with a loud Voice, *Has any one any thing to object against any Man? Is there here any one not heartily Reconciled? Embrace one another.* Then as a sign of their being all in perfect Charity.

*Const. A.  
post. viii. c.  
vi  
Conc. Laod.  
c. xix.*

*Dionys.  
Hier. Eccl.  
c. iii.  
Chrysost.  
hom. iii. in  
ep. ad Ephes.*

rity, they gave each other the Kiss of Peace; the Clergy, by themselves, and amongst the Layety, the Men by themselves, and the Women by themselves.

XXXII.

The Sa-  
crifice and  
Sacred  
Habits,

AFTER all these preparatorys began the *Sacrifice*. The Deacons assisted by the Subdeacons, spread the Cloath on the Altar, and upon another Table, (now called the *Credence*, from that Italian Word signifying a Cupboard) they set in order the Communion Plate, and amongst the rest, the Patens and Calices, and for Decency and Cleanliness sake covered them with a Cloath over them. Then, as the Author of the Apostolical Constitutions informs us, the Bishop came to the Altar in a rich Habit. Which shews that they had even in those Days particular Habits for the Altar.

Not that those Habits had any thing singular in the make or Figure of them.

The *Chasuble* was a common wearing Habit in the time of St. *Austin*, and the like we find of the *Dalmatic* in the time of the Emperour *Valerian*. The *Stole* was a kind of Cloak, and worn by Women

as well as Men; we have now confounded it with the *Orarium*, which was a

kind of Linnen Handkerchief, worn by those who affected Neatness, to wipe the

Sweat off their Necks and Faces; And the

the *Maniple* was only a Napkin hanging cross their Arms, for their more decent serving at the Holy Table. The *Albe* it self, that is the White Robe of either Linnen or Woollen, was not at the beginning an Habit peculiar to Clerks, since the Emperour *Aurelian* gave the People of *Rome* a largess of these kind of Tunicks, as well as of those large Handkerchiefs which they called *Oraria*.

But as afterwards when the *Albe* was the common Habit of the Clergy in which they allways appeared, the Priests were enjoined to have by them one particular *Albe*, never to be put on, but at the Altar, that they might then appear unfullied. So tis probable that when they commoly wore the *Chasuble* and the *Dalmatic*, they had particular ones for the use of the Altar, not differing in Shape from the common sort, but of richer Stuffs and Lively Colours. Above all the Canons require of the Priests and Deacons never to perform the publick Offices of the Church without having on their *Orarium*; the use of which was at the same time forbidden to the Inferiour Ministers.

They were willing that the Clergy even by their Figure and Appearance, should give the People a great notion of their Character. That their Faces, their Hands and their Cloaths appearing clean and

Mappula.

Surplice.

Vopif. Aur.

Hom. Leon.

P. iv. to viii.

Conc. P.

xxxiv.

Constit. Ri-

culfi. Suefs.

c. 7. an.

589. to ix.

Conc.

Conc. Brae.

iv. c. iii. an.

675.

Conc. Laod.

c. xii. 13.

Const. A-  
post. viii. c.  
xii,

August. 22.  
Civit. c. viii.  
de Floren-  
tio Sartore  
Hippon. V.  
ff. de ves-  
tim. leg.

V. Thomass.  
Discipl. P.  
i. l. i. c. 31.  
C P. ii. l. i.  
c. xxiii.

and without spots might be a sign of an inward Purity and Innocence; that the Modesty and Gravity of their Looks, their Air and Motion might command Respect and excite Religion. The Prelates were so Nice herein, that St. *Ambrose* turned

*Amb.ii. off.*  
c. 19.

out of the number of the Clergy two Persons, the one for an Indecent Mien, and the other for an unseemly way of Walking. And the event justified the judgment he made both upon the one and the other. But here it must still be remembered that those Fathers were *Greeks* and *Romans*, who had the highest Ideas of true Decorum, and were polished to the greatest exactness.

The Bishop standing at the Altar, took from the Hands of the Deacons the Oblations they had received from the People; but in some Churches the Bishop himself went to receive the Offerings of the more honourable Persons, such as the Senators and their Wives at *Rome*: For all Persons Great and Small, the Magistrates and Princes themselves Communicated together. On the Altar was placed only the Bread and Wine, which was to be the matter of the Sacrifice. As for all other sorts of Oblations, the Luminary, the Money in Specie, and whatsoever else the Faithful offered for the Occasions of the Church, the Deacons received those and laid

laid them up in Places appointed for that purpose: 'Tis true, they laid upon the Altar the new Fruits to have a Benediction pronounced over them at the end of the Sacrifice.

They used for the *Eucharist* no other Bread but what was offered by the People, and blessed by the Bishop; and as a sign of Communion with those that were absent, they sent to them some of the Bread blessed, but not Consecrated. All the faithful were obliged to offer, at least all that were to Communicate; nor was it thought reasonable that the Rich should Communicate of that which the poor offered. The Bishop himself made his offering; and to that purpose there was at *Rome* the Bishops Oblationary Subdeacon. So that the Loaves of Bread came in there in such vast Numbers, that the Altar was (as is expressed in some of the ancient Prayers) as it were overloaded with them. The Corporal was a large Table Cloth stretched out at length, and held by two Deacons at the two ends of the Altar, to receive these Oblations. It belonged to the Arch-Deacon to place these Loaves decently on the Altar, and to set the *Calice* of Wine there, which was to be Consecrated; and to be better assured, there was nothing in it, they strained it through a Silver Cullander.

*Epist. decr.*  
*Inocenti. ad*  
*decentium.*

*Ordo. Rom.*

*Sacr. in na-*  
*tiv. S. Jo. &*  
*in vig.*  
*omn. S. S.*  
*Ordo. Rom.*

*Componere*  
*altare.*

The

Apoc. viii.  
3, 4, 5.

The Pastor after the Oblation of the Bread and Wine, offered also the Incense which was to represent the Prayers of the faithfull; as St. *John* in the Apocalyps, saw an Angel employed at the Altar in offering up to God these spiritual Odors. They fumed with the Incense (as is still done) the Altar, the Oblations, the Clergy, and the People; and to this use they apply'd none but right Perfumes, the best Franckincence, and other *Aromatick* Gums, the richest then known in the World; and that with such a Magnificence too, that the Church of *Rome* had Lands in *Syria* and other Provinces of the East appropriated for supplying the Altar with these Perfumes. During the Offertory, was sung a Psalm; of which there is now left only a Versicle, which was with them the Anthem.

XXXIII.  
Consecra-  
tion, Com-  
munion.  
Const. Apo.  
viii. xi.

AFTER the Offerings were performed, the Doors of the Church were shut and carefully Guarded by some of the Deacons or Ostiaries, placed there for that purpose, who might not open them even to the Faithful themselves, till the Communion was over. Other Deacons there were walking softly about the Church to see that no body made the least noise; and it was the peculiar business of one, or the least sign of them to keep an Eye over the Children

dren: They had a place assigned them near the Bishop's Chair; and as for those that were very small, their Mothers were ordered to take them into their Arms: Thus all the People were kept to a deep silence, and heard with a profound Reverence and Attention, the Prayers of the *Preface*, and of that part of the Service which we now call the *Canon*. The Bishop Pronounced the Words with a loud Voice, and all the People said *Amen*, as they did at the end of all other Prayers. These Prayers were much longer than they are now, as is still to be seen in the Oriental Liturgies. The Church of *Rome* retained hath nothing of this form but the Essentials; formerly this *Canon* was an Abridgment of the History of Religion, Praising God for the Creation of the World, for restoring it after the Deluge, for the call of *Abraham*; for the special Favours vouchsafed to the Children of *Israel*; and lastly, for the Incarnation of his Son, and the Redemption of Mankind.

Const. Apo.  
viii. 12.

After the Consecration, the Bishop took the Communion himself first; then he gave it to the Priests, then to the Deacons and other Clerks, after them to the *Asceticks* or *Monks*, to the Deaconesses, to the Virgins and other Religious Persons, to Children, and at last to all the People. To shorten this Service, which was always

Const. Apo.  
viii. 13.

ways very long; many of the Priests assisted at the same time, in distributing the Body of our Lord; and many of the Deacons in Administering of the Cup: And to avoid Confusion, the Priest and Deacons carried the Communion walking through the ranks of the People, in the same Order as they had before received the Offerings; none of the Communicants stirring out of his place. The Men received the Body of Jesus Christ in their Hands; and the Women in peices of Linnen made on purpose for that use. The Crumbs and Fragments that were left of the *Eucharist*, they gave to little Children; and the rest of the Bread offered, but not Consecrated, was distributed among those who did not Communicate: And from hence came the *Panis Benedictus* or the Blessed Bread. During the Communion they sung a Psalm; of which we have now nothing left but the Anthem. In the Fourth Age the Communion began to be less frequented than formerly. St. *Chrysostom* complains that many came to the sacred Mysteries and did not Communicate; and that many others Communicated only on the Festivals, and others again that Communicated but once or twice a Year.

From all this it follows, that their *Liturgy* must needs have been long: Nor in-

Ord. Rom.

Hom. iii. in  
ep. ad Eph.

Hom. 17. in  
ep. ad Heb.

indeed did Christians then think they had any thing else to do on Sundays but to serve God. St. *Gregory* to shew how his Infirmities were increased upon him, complains that he was scarce able to stand upon his Legs for those three Hours while he performed the Office of the Church. And yet the *Canon* of the Mass was much the same then as it is now; and those Sermons of his which are left us are very short.

Lib. viii. ep.  
xxxv.

ALL the Publick Service of the Church was accompanied with Singing. The same hath been observed of the former times; but 'tis to be supposed this publick Singing grew much more in use upon the Churches being freed from Persecution: St. *Austin* ascribes to St. *Ambrose* the having introduced into the West the use of Singing the *Psalms* in imitation of the Churches of the East, and it is about the same time that we find St. *Damasus* the Pope enjoining it. St. *Basil* tells us, that in his time the *Psalms* were sung both in Private Houses and in publick Places; and that the singing was so agreeable, that the pleasure help'd to convey the Religion of the Hymn into the minds of the People with more advantage: And this was the true design of Musick.

XXXIV.  
The Chant  
and Magnificence  
of the publick Service.

August. ix.  
Confess. vii.

Lib. Pontif  
in Damaso

Basil. in  
Psalm. i.

The

V. Platon.  
iii. de Re-  
pub.

x. Conf 33.

The Antient Musick was not yet lost, which was diversifyed into several kinds of Harmony, variously applyed as the Nature of the Subject did require, Soft or Strong, Gay or Sad, Grave or Passionate. And we may conclude that in the Services of the Church, they made choice of that which agreed best with the Majesty and Purity of Religion; and that they carefully avoided to apply to the sacred Mysteries, and the praying of God Soft and Effeminate Airs, or such as might tend to affect the Heart with too sensible a Tenderness, or put the Spirits into any dangerous Commotion. However St. *Austin* thought the Singing in the West somewhat too Soft and *Secular*; and judged the Practise of St. *Athanasius* more Safe, who caused the Psalms to be pronounced by the Reader with so small an alteration of Voice, that it was rather plain speaking then singing. I leave it to those who understand this Science to inquire whether we have not some remains of this Antiquity in our *Plein Chant* or Church Musick brought in by St. *Gregory*. For what we now call Musick, is certainly a clearly Different thing and altogether Modern. As for the Chanting of the Prayers and Lessons, that we see consists but of very few Notes, only to help to keep up the Voice, and mark the distinction of

of the Periods. I think I have said enough to shew how well the Bishops of these first times, understood to manage the objects of Sense, so as to make them subservient to the end of Religion, and by their help to make Impressions of Piety even upon the most heavy and Illiterate. For Instance let us suppose the solemn manner of their Celebrating the *Vigil* of Easter at *Rome*, under the Pope St. *Leo*. The Faithful on that Holy Night (with their reverend Bishop at the Head of them) Assembled together in a Body in the Lateran Church. In the first place immediately upon the Benediction of the new Fire, an incredible number of Lights made the Holy Night look as glorious as a fine Day. We may imagin what a charming Sight it must needs have been to see this August Magnificent Church filled with such a Numerous Assembly and yet in so vast a Multitude of People nothing of Noise, Tumult or Confusion; but every one Regularly disposed and Ranged according to the Quality of their Age and Sex, and the station they held in the Church. And especially distinguish'd from the rest were those who were to receive Baptism that very Night, together with those who had accomplished their Penance and had been but two Days before Readmitted into the Church. Their Eyes were enter-

V. Euseb.  
vi. Hist. c.  
ix

P

tained



tained on every side with the Marbles and Paintings, the glittering of the Gold, Silver and Precious Stones that Sparkled upon the Consecrated Plate, and especially near the Holy Altar. The silence of the Night admitted of no other Interruption, but the Lessons out of the Prophets Pronounced with a clear distinct and intelligible Voice, and intermixt with the Singing of the Versicles; that so this Variety might make both of them more agreeable. So many grand and delightful Objects presenting themselves at one and the same time, could not but awaken the Soul and inspire her with Vigour both to attend to those Holy Lessons and profit by them, especially being prepared for them before hand, by continual exercises in the Word of God. What must the Gravity and Modesty of the Deacons and other sacred Ministers have needs been, who were made choice of, and bred by such a Prelate, and serv'd in his presence, or rather in the presence of God, whom their own thoughts represented to them always before their Eyes? But above all, How Majestick must the Pope himself appear, so venerable for his Learning, his Elocution, his Zeal, his Courage, and all his other Vertues? With what an awefull Reverence, with how Affectionate a Piety must he have pronounced

ced over the Sacred Fonts, those Prayers which he himself first Compos'd; and which his successors have found so Pious, that they have still preserved the same for us the space of twelve hundred Years? I can no longer Wonder that on these occasions and under such helps of Devotion, the Christians of those Days should quite forget their Body; and having Fasted all the Day before, should pass this Holy Night of the Resurrection also in Watching and Prayer without eating a bitt till the Day following.

BUT this great Day being come, and the time of their Fasts expired, the greatest Saints did not only allow, but also enjoin the refreshing of the Body. How profitable soever Fasting might be to raise up the Soul to God, and Facilitate the Duty of Prayer, for which exercise of Devotion the Feasts of the Church were chiefly designed; yet it was forbidden to fast on Sundays, or on the Festival Days, or throughout the whole *Quinquagesima*. So they called it, not as we do now, the fifty Days before Easter, but the fifty Days between Easter and Whitsunday. 'Tis true the Monks of Egypt used great precautions least they should by this little Relaxation lose the fruit of their past Abstinence. But at last they observed

XXXV.  
The Solemnity of Feasts of the Church.  
*Pilgrimage*

*Cass. Collat. xxi. de remissionibus.*

Vie de saint  
Pacome. c.  
viii.

S. Greg. ii.  
Dial. c. i.

S. Leo.  
Serm. iii. de  
Quadrages.

the Church Distinction. St. *Pacomus* according to the direction of St. *Palemon* his Master on Easter-day Eat a Sallet of Herbs and Oil instead of dry Bread only, which was their usual Dyet at other times. A certain Holy Priest, as God had put it into his mind, on an Easter Day carryed to St. *Benet* a present of Provisions for him to make better Cheer at that time than ordinary, and to express a more sensible rejoycing on the same Occasion. St. *Anthony* was wont on Easter and Whitsunday to put on his Coat of Palmtree-leaves, which was left him by St. *Paul* the first Hermite, and St. *Athanasius* at the same time appeared clad in the Cloak St. *Anthony* had left to him. And from that time forward, it was an established custom among Christians to apparel themselves on the Festivals in their Richest Habits, and to make better Fare than ordinary on those Days.

The Feasts of the Martyrs had proportionable honours paid to them, and were Celebrated with a great Concourse of People. On Sundays and other Feasts, common to the whole Church, every one was content to stay at home with his own Bishop. But on these special Feasts, they ran from all parts to celebrate the Memory of the Saints; so that upon these occasions many of the Bishops themselves of-

often met together at their Tombs. By one example, we may judge of the rest. St. *Paulinus* reckons up more then twenty names, as well of Cities as Provinces in *Italy*, whose Inhabitants did every Year assemble together in vast Troops with their Wives and Children to Celebrate the Feast of St. *Felix*; notwithstanding the Rigor of the Season, it being kept on the fourteenth of *January*: And all this only for one single confessor in that single City of *Nola*. What then must have been done throughout the whole Christian World? What at *Rome*, upon the Feast of St. *Hippolytus*, of St. *Laurence*, of the Apostles, St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*? They flocked to *Rome* from the most distant places, and at all times: And that was the Rise of *Pilgrimages*. In the time of the Persecution under the Emperor *Claudius* the second, St. *Marius* together with St. *Martha* his Wife and Children, took a journey to *Rome* on purpose to perform their Devotions there; and upon that occasion they there suffered Martyrdom. The same hapned not long after to St. *Maurus*, who came out of *Africa* to visit the Sepulchers of the Apostles. And before St. *Alexander* was chosen Bishop of *Jerusalem* and joyned with *Narcissus* in the Administration of the same See, he took a Pilgrimage from *Cappadocia* to *Jerusalem*

Natali. 3.

Prud. Peristeph. ii.  
ii, 12.  
Martyr.  
Jun. xxix.  
de S. Cassio.

Martyrol.  
xix. Janu.

Ibid. xxii,  
Novem.

*Euseb. vi. hist. ii.* on purpose to see the Holy City, there and visit the Celebrated Places of Devotion thereabouts.

And indeed this was a proper means of assisting piety by Sense. The sight of the Reliques of a Saint; his Sepulchre, his Prison, his Chains and the Instruments of his Martyrdom: All these made a quite different Impression upon the Mind from the bare hearing of these things spoken of at a distance. To which add the Miracles frequently wrought at their Tombs, which often made the Infidels themselves glad to visit them, upon the pressing Interests of their Lives and Healths. Every one knows that one of the first effects of the liberty of Christianity was St. *Helenas* care to have due Honours done to the Holy Places of the City of *Jerusalem*, and throughout all the Holy Land; And from that time forward, the practise of going in Pilgrimage to those Places of Devotion, became more common than before. And St. *Jerome*, an eye Witness, assures us that there were always to be seen in the Holy City a vast concourse of all sorts of Itinerant People flocking thither from all parts of the World, even Doctors and Bishops themselves. Nor was it then so difficult a thing to take such long Journeys through the vast extent of the *Roman Empire*, by

*Hier. ad Marcell.*

rea-

reason of the convenience of its situation all round the *Mediterranean Sea*, and the great Roads they had laid out in all Quarters for the passage of their Armies and publick Carriages: So that it was no great adventure now to pass from *Spain* or *Gaul* into *Aegypt*, or *Palestine* or *Asia*.

This Honour could be paid to the Martyrs only in the places where they had suffered, till they found the way of dividing and Translating their Reliques. The *Greeks* generally took to that method; but at *Rome* St. *Gregory* the Pope declares *Greg. iii. ep. 30. Brandea.* that to his time, for the Reliques of the holy Apostles, they only sent abroad some peices of Linnen that had touched their Sepulchres, or Golden Keys which had locked up some of the fileings of St. *Peter's* Chains. Every Nation was careful even to a Jealousy, to keep to themselves their Reliques, as Pledges of the Protection of the Saints, and a Blessing sent from Heaven to the City or Province in whose Custody they were lodged: Nor were the Temporal advantages they reaped from them inconsiderable: The Inhabitants were enriched by the concourse of Pilgrims; and the veneration for the Memory of the Saints often moved the Princes to grant the right of Sanctuary, and exemption from Taxes to the places where their Reliques were deposited. Every one

*S. Greg. ep. v. vi. vi. 23.*

*V. Prud. Perist. passim.*

*Greg. Turon. hist.* knows the extraordinary Priviledges of St. Martin of Tours in France.

'Tis probable also, 'twas not till these Times of the Liberty of the Church that the course of the Ecclesiastical Year was brought to an exact regulation. The Question concerning the Day on which Easter ought to be Celebrated, was not entirely determined till the Council of Nice, as indeed there had not till then been held any Oecumenical Council, because it was a thing impossible under the Heathen Emperors to bring together so great an Assembly of Bishops. It was in these times a received Rule not to Administer Baptism but on Easter or Witsunday, as appears by the Pope St. Leo's condemning the practice of the Bishops of Sicily who Baptised at Epiphany. In the same Epistle he also gives us the Reasons of the Church for instituting her Feasts, and Appropriating them to the different parts of the Ecclesiastical year, and how all this was done for the more solemn Commemoration of the several Mysteries of the Life of Jesus Christ.

Nor was it till these times of Liberty that the Solemn Fasts of the Church were generally taken notice of; and more especially that of Lent Fast. No person whatsoever was dispenced with from keeping the Fast; no Condition, no Age could

*Basil orat. de jejuniis. Hier. Epi. eni. ad Letam. 22. ad Enstoch.*

could plead an Exemption. All business was laid aside: One might have seen the most populous Cities as still and quiet as Deserts. The faithful passed the greatest part of the Day in the Churches, praying, Reading the Scriptures, and hearing Sermons; whence it comes to pass, that the Office for the days of Lent is always longer than the usual Service at other times. During all that Season, there were Celebrated no Feasts of the Martyrs, nor any Persons allowed to Marry. To the Ninth Age the Custome continued, forbearing Acts of Hostility all the time of Lent, and neither Armies to March, nor People to Travel, unless upon Extraordinary Occasions.

*Chrysost. in Gen. hom. ii. init.*

ALL these Observations were but the Consequences of Pennance, to which those Days of Fasting were peculiarly designed; and that is the reason why the Preparation of those who were to receive Baptism was reserved to the time of Lent; as was also the satisfactions which were to be made by those who were fallen after Baptism. The joyful Feasts of Christmas and Epiphany being past, they entred upon a Course of Praying for the Remission of Sins, and of exciting Sinners to Repentance; as we now do from Septuagesima Sunday; for that is manifestly the design of

XXXVI.  
The Ceremonies of Pennance.

of all the Offices proper to that Season. The Lessons out of *Genesis* represent to us the Power of the Creator, his Justice and his Severity. Here we see *Adam* driven out of the Terrestrial Paradise, the guilty old World destroyed by the Deluge, and those four infamous Cities consumed with Fire from Heaven. They whose Consciences were awakened by these Examples, and by the powerful Exhortations of the Prelates, apply'd themselves to them or to their Priests appointed to this Ministry; and after having made sincere Confession of their Sins, received thereupon necessary Instructions what they were to do. For it belonged to the Pastor to Judge whether he who accused himself, was fit to be admitted to Pennance; what Penalty should be imposed, and for how long a time; whether his Pennance should be secret or open, and whether it were proper for the Edification of the Church, that he should make the same Confession in publick. Young Persons were not readily admitted to Pennance by reason of the Frailty of their Age, which made them afraid their Conversion might not hold. Their Conversion was likewise suspected who did not desire Pennance till the Extremity of Sicknes: These if they recovered were obliged to go thorow their Course of Canonical Pennance.

*Orig. hom.*  
*ii. in ps. 38.*  
*Socr. v.*  
*hist. c. 19.*

*Innoc. i. ad*  
*Exup. c.*  
*Augu. Ser.*  
*57. de temp.*  
*Conc. Ara.*  
*i. c. iii.*  
*Careh. iv.*  
*can. 76. 78.*

Many

Many did publick Pennance without any ones knowing the Particular Sins for which they did it, and many performed their Pennance in private for great Crimes, as Married Women for Adulteries committed unknown to their Husbands; those whose being exposed to publick Pennance would have occasioned too much Scandal, as Priests and others that would have lost their Lives if their Crimes had been made Publick. But to have seen Christians Fasting, Praying, Prostrating themselves upon the Earth, even out of simple Devotion, was then so common a sight, that none ever thought of enquiring into the particular occasions of it. The times of Pennance were either longer or shorter, according to the different usages of Churches; and those Penitential Canons which are now remaining, differ very much from one another; but the more ancient generally the more severe. St. *Basil* allots two years for Theft, seven for Fornication, eleven for Perjury, fifteen for Adultery, Twenty for Murder, and the whole Life for Apostacy.

*Aug. Epist.*  
*118. ad Jan.*  
*Prospe. con-*  
*templ. ii. c. 7*

*S. Leo. Ep.*  
*80. & 92.*  
*ad Rustic.*  
*c. ii.*

*Ep. iii. Can.*  
*ad Amphilo-*  
*ch. c. 56.*  
*58. 59. 61.*  
*64. 73.*

*Pont. Rom.*  
*v. Hier. epi-*  
*graph. Fabi-*  
*olx.*

*Sozom. vii.*  
*hist. c. 16.*

They who were enjoined to do publick Pennance, applied themselves to the Arch-Priest or the Priest Penitentiary, who took down their names in writing; after that, on the first Day of *Lent*, they presented themselves at the Door of the Church in

The Man-  
ners of the  
Israelites.  
in English  
c. 17. & 19.

a poor and torn Habit; for such with the ancients were their Mourning Dresses: Being entred the Church, they received from the hands of the Bishop ashes to strew on their Heads and Sackcloth to cover their Bodies; thus they remained lying upon the Ground, while the Bishop with the Clergy, and all the People kneeled down and prayed for them. The Bishop made an Exhortation to let them Understand that he was going to drive them out of the Church for a time, as God drove *Adam* out of Paradise for his Transgression, bidding them at the same time be of good courage, and labour in hope of the Mercy of God; then he actually put them out of the Church, and immediately the Door was shut against them. The Penitents generally kept themselves close shut up, passing their time in Praying and mourning, save on the Festival or Station days, on which they presented themselves at the Door of the Church, and this they continued to do for some time: Afterward they were admitted to enter the Church and hear the reading of the Scriptures and the Sermon, but obliged to depart before Prayers began. After that they were admitted to join in Prayer with the faithful, but in a posture of Prostration. At last they were admitted to pray standing as others tho' yet still they were distinguish-

Lib. sacra-  
ment.  
Amb. i. p. en.  
c. 16. penit.  
Rom. tit. i.  
c. 11.

S. Elog. hom  
viii.

guished from the rest of the Congregation, by being placed on the left side of the Church; from hence it appears there were four Orders of Penitents, the *Flentes*, the *Audientes*, the *Prostrati*, and the *Consistentes*; that is those that Prayed standing: And the whole course of Penance was divided into these four States.

As for instance, he that had been guilty of willful Murder, was four years among the *Flentes*; that is to say, he was to come to the Door of the Church at the Hours of Prayer, and to stand there, not so much as in the Porch, but in a place exposed to the Weather. He was to be cloathed with Sackcloth, to have Ashes on his Head, and not to cut his Hair. Thus he stood begging of the Faithful as they entred into the Church to take pity on him and to pray to God for him: And so indeed they did; the whole Church in her publick Service always remembring to pray for the Penitents in particular, as she still doth during the time of *Lent*. The five following years he was in the rank of *Auditors*, He entered the Church to hear the Instructions there delivered, but so as to remain in the *Vestibulum* or Porch only, with the *Catechumens*; and to depart before the Prayers began: From thence he passed to the third Rank, and was

Conc. An-  
cyr.

Consisten-  
tes.

S. Bas. can.  
56.

Ep. S. Greg.  
Thaum. c. 1.

Ambros. de  
penit. i. c.  
vii. 15. 2. c.  
vii. 10.



was admitted to join in Prayers with the Faithful, but in the same place as before, and Prostrate or lying down upon the Floor, and he went out with the *Catechumens*. After having been seven years in this State, he passed to the last, in which he remained four years, joining in Prayer with the Faithful, and standing as they did; but was not permitted to offer or Communicate with them. At last his twenty Years of Penance being thus accomplished, he was again received into full Communion with the Church, and admitted to the Participation of Holy things, that is the Eucharist.

The same Proportion was observed in the Fifteen Years Penance of the Adulterer. He was four Years among the *Flentes*, five among the *Audientes*, four with the *Prostrati*, and two with the *Consistentes*. And by this one may judge of the other sort of Offenders. Not that time alone did always determine the Penance. The Bishops carefully examined the Proficiency of the Penitents, and from thence took their Measures either of using them with a greater indulgence, or of deferring their Reconciliation. Their Fundamental Rule was to labour all they could for the Salvation of their Neighbour; but not so as to destroy themselves together with those who were incorrigible. The Penitent

*S. Basil.*  
*ibid.* 84, 85

tent therefore did not advance from one degree to another, but only by the appointment of the Bishop: But if he dyed during the course of his Penance, before he had accomplished it and received Absolution; they had yet good hopes of his Salvation. They prayed for him, and offered for him the Holy Sacrifice. When the Bishop judged it proper to put a final Period to his Penance, it was done at the end of *Lent*, that the Penitent might reenter upon his Participation of the Holy Mysteries at the Feast of *Easter*.

On Holy Thursday the Penitents presented themselves at the Door of the Church. The Bishop having offered up many Prayers to God on their behalf, caused them to enter, at the instances of the Arch Deacon; representing to him that this was a time proper for Clemency, and that 'twas but reasonable that as the Church encreased the number of her Flock at that time by the new Baptized, she should take also then into her fold again the strayed Sheep. The Arch-Priest also interceded on behalf of the Penitents, and gave them his Testimonial that they were worthy to be reconciled. For to him it belonged to examine them during the time of their Penance. Then the Bishop made an Exhortation to them, putting them in mind of the mercies of God, and

*Ambr. ii.*  
*Penit. c. 9.*

*Conc. Arel.*  
*ii. c. 23.*  
*Con. Carth.*  
*iv. c. 59.*

*Pont. Rom.*

S. Elig.  
hom. viii.  
& II.

and of that newness of life which they ought to live in for the time to come, requiring them in token of their Consent and promise thereunto to hold up their Hands. At length suffering himself to be prevailed upon by the intreaties of the Church, and being persuaded of the sincerity of their Conversion, he gave them Solemn Absolution. Then they shaved and polled themselves, quitted their Penitential habits and began to live like the other Faithful. There was without doubt great diversity in these outward Ceremonies, according to the difference of times and places. But they all tended to the same end, and had a powerful Effect to make the offender sensible of the Enormity of sin, and of the difficulty of recovering out of it; and to keep those still within bounds who as yet had preserved their Innocence. Should a Man, saith St. *Austin*, too easily return to the Happiness of his first Estate, he would look upon the falling into Mortal sin as a meer Trifle.

Serm. xxiv.  
de divers.

XXXVII.  
Christian  
Princes.

NO PERSON how great soever in the World was exempt from Pennance. Princes were as Subject to it as private Persons; and the Example of *Theodosius* will never be forgotten in the Church. In the foregoing Ages none could have be-

believed that the great ones would ever have submitted themselves to the severity of the Churches Discipline. They could not possibly conceive how the Humility and Mortification of a Christian could have been reconciled with absolute power and vast possessions, 'Twas this undoubtedly that made *Tertullian* say that the *Cæsars* had become Christians long before, if they could have been at the same time *Cæsars* and Christians; and *Origen* speaks of it much after the same manner. *Apol. c. xxi.* This strange work hath God at last brought to pass in the sight of the whole World. And this is that mighty Change that gave Date to the Liberty of the Church, that period of time I am now speaking of. *Cont. Cels. L. viii.*

Presently upon the Conversion of *Constantine* the name of Jesus Christ was written upon the Roman Ensigns, and his Cross displayed in the midst of their Armies. That Instrument of the most Infamous Punishment was now turned into the most glorious Ornament of the Imperial Diadem. The Emperor had an Oratory in his Palace, where he shut himself up whole Days together to read the Holy Scriptures: Observing the stated hours of Prayer, and more especially on Sundays, upon which he obliged the Heathens themselves to rest from their

*Euseb. iv.  
vita Const.  
c. xvii. xxi.*

Q

La-

Sozom. i.  
Hist. c. viii.

Euseb. iii.  
vita Const.  
c. xlvii.

Euseb. iii.  
Vita Const.  
c. vi. vii.

Socrat hist.  
i. c. v. viii

Labours. He caused to be carried in his Army a Tent in the form of a Church, for singing Divine Service in and Administering the Sacraments to the Faithful; and to that purpose he was always attended by some Priests and Deacons. He made *Constantinople* a City perfectly Christian. The Eve of Easter was Celebrated there with a most magnificent Illumination, not only within the Churches, but without. All over the City there were set up lighted Tapers, or rather Pillars of Wax, which gloriously turned the Night into Day. In the principal *Squares* of the City, one might have seen the Fountains adorned with the Images of the good Shepherd or of *Daniel* in the Lion's Den. There were no Idols or Temples of the false Gods to be found within her Walls. Who knows not how Magnificently *Constantine* treated the Fathers of the *Nice* Council, and the Honours he did them. He furnished them with carriages to bring them from the most Remote parts of that vast Empire; he defrayed their Expences all the time of their Session, and sent them home Loaded with Presents. He burn't the Bills of Accusation that had been preferred to him against the Bishops; he Kissed the Scars of the Confessors, that still had upon them the marks of the Persecution; he entred the Coun-

Council without his Guards, appeared there with a Modest and Respectful Air, and did not sit down till the Bishops gave him a sign. At the Conclusion of the Council he made a great Feast for them in his Palace, and sate at Table with them. Then it was that Jesus Christ was manifestly seen Reigning over the Kings of the Earth!

*Theodosius* the Great, did yet more Honour to Religion, and that by the practice of those vertues it requires: He was much in Prayer, apply'd himself to God in his greatest Affairs, and ascribed to him the success of his Armes: He had suffered himself to be transported into a Passion against the Inhabitants of *Thessalonica*. The Sin was great, but his Repentance was Proportionable, and he valued none of the Bishops so highly as St. *Ambrose*; because he found none that less flattered him. His Empress hath also an high Character given her in History for her Piety, and for her Charity towards the Poor. The same Spirit run through the Family, but shined forth most brightly in St. *Pulcheria* their Grand-daughter; who at the Age of fifteen (together with her two Sisters) Consecrated herself to God by a Vow of Virginity, and who without quitting the Court, led a Life in it so retired, so full of Business, so Religious, that the Wri-

*Theod. hist.*  
*Eccle. iv. c.*  
17.

ters of those times compared the Palace to a Monastery, the Holiest thing they could think of.

In this School of vertue she caused to be brought up the young Emperor *Theodosius* her Brother, making him practice the same exercises of Religion with her self. He rose constantly at the dawn of the Day to join with his Sisters in singing the Praises of God, Prayed often, frequented the Churches, and presented them largely: He fasted often, principally on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*: His Palace was furnished with a choice Library of Ecclesiastical Writers. He had the Holy Scripture by Heart, and discoursed of it with the Bishops as readily as if he had been one of them himself. He gave a great respect to them, and had an honour for all good Christians. He caused the Reliques of many Saints to be translated with great Pomp. He founded many Hospitals and many Monasteries.

His Sister did not only exercise him in the Practices of Religion, but caused him to be taught with the greatest care all the Accomplishments proper for an Emperor. He had the best Masters to instruct him in Learning, and others to teach him the Exercises of Riding and *Arms*. He was used to the bearing of heat and Cold, Hunger and Thirst. She her self

*Socr. vii. c. 22.*

*Sozom. ix. c. i.*

*Theod. iv. c. 36.*

self Tutored him in all the Rules of Decency, and Deportment, in his Habits, in his Gestures, in his Gate and Posture of walking: She brake his practice of falling into loud and suddain fits of Laughter; taught him how to appear (as occasion might require) either Terrible or Pleasant, and to hearken with Patience to the matter before him. He was a perfect Master of his Passion, obliging humane and tender to a Degree of Compassion.

Such was *Theodosius* the younger, tho' born into an Empire in the *Luxurious* East, and in a very corrupt Age. The Emperor *Marcian*, who after his great services and long experience succeeded him in the Throne, discovered the same Piety, and the same zeal for Religion; but joined with greater Force and Capacity. There needs no other proof of his Worth than the choice *St. Palcheria* made of him, who Married him only to let him into a Partnership with her in the Empire, but upon Condition of keeping her Vow of Virginity.

WHILE the Princes lived at this rate, one may easily imagin how eminently holy the Lives of the Bishops and their Clergy were. Yet in the outward Manner of their living, the Liberty of the Church produced some change, which may deserve our Consideration: 'Twas now they began

XXXVIII.  
The Manners of the Clergy.

V. Thom.  
Disc. p. ii.  
li. c. 20, &c

to wear some Exteriour Badges of their profession: Though to speak the Truth, the difference of Habit was scarce perceivable till after the Reign of the Barbarous Princes under whom the Clergy still kept to the Habit of the *Romans*, as they did to their Laws and Language.

Many embraced the way of Living in common, as being the more perfect Life; and taken from the first Church of *Jerusalem*: These as far as possibly they could contrive it, Lodged all in the same House and eat in the same Hall; At least they held nothing in Propriety, subsisting only on what the Church supplied them with; so that they made one large Family, of which the Bishop was the Father: Such were the Clergy under St. *Eusebius Vercellensis* under St. *Martin*, and St. *Austin*; and these were called Canonical Clerks or Canons, by way of distinction from those who did not live up so strictly to the Letter of the Canons, whose service the Church nevertheless accepted of.

They who were not thus embodied, lived at least two or three of them together. The Priests who were confin'd to Churches in the Country, had with them some young Clerks whom they directed in their Studies, whose Manners they formed, and whom they kept always by them as Witnesses of their own Conversation

*V. Thom.*  
*Disc. p. i. l.*  
*i. c. 56. &*  
*p. ii. l. i. c.*  
*46. & p. iii.*  
*l. c. 28. &*  
*51.*

tion. Such were those young Readers who suffered Martyrdom in *Africa* by the *Vandals*. The Bishop had also some Priest or Deacon who never stired from him, but lay always in the same Chamber with him: And this was he whom the *Greeks* called the *Syncellus*, which afterwards became an high Dignity. The Pope St. *Gregory* had none but Clerks or Monks in his Palace, and this Custom is still observ'd in the Court of *Rome*, where the Domestick Officers of the Pope are all in Holy Orders.

But whether the Ecclesiasticks lived in Common or separate, they were not allow'd to have Women lodging in the same Houses with them. Among the Accusations against *Paulus Samosatenus*, this was one, that he kept in the House with him two young handsome Women whom he carried about with him where ever he went: And that he also permitted his Priests and Deacons to entertain that sort of Women whom they called *Subintroductæ*. This was an abuse grown common when the Church was unpersecuted; against which there are extant many Treatises of the Fathers and Regulations of the Councils. It was first Introduced upon the pretence of Charity: For these Persons who lived in this manner with the Clerks were Virgins Consecrated to God, or such others that made a particular pro-

*Martyrol.*  
*Jul. iii.*

*Conc. Antioch. ii. an.*  
*270.*  
*Euseb. vii.*  
*Hist. c. 10.*

*Subintroductæ. Aga.*  
*pt. v.*

Q.

fession

fession of Devotion; to whom the Clergy pretended to be instead of Fathers or Brothers, managing their Affairs, and doing for them those services which they could not decently do themselves, especially in places where Women rarely appeared in Publick. And these devout Women on their side, performed for their Brothers all those Domestick Offices which were consistent with the Honour of their Profession: For notwithstanding their Inhabiting together, they pretended nevertheless to keep their Vow of Continence; and St. *Chrysostom* encountering this abuse, supposes that they effectually did so. He accuses them only of being pleased in seeing and discoursing with each other, That the Pleasure of Conversation was more affecting between Persons of different Sex, that by this means they were carried on to Scandal and Indecency, and rashly exposed themselves to the danger of a Crime. To rectify this disorder, the unmarried Clerks were absolutely forbidden all habitation with Women that were Strangers; that is to say, all that were not very nearly Related to them; which the Council of *Nice* restrained to Sisters, Mothers, and Aunts. And besides the point of Cohabitation, it was not thought convenient that Ecclesiasticks should have much Conversation with Women, though under the pre-

*In eos qui  
tenent sub-  
iger.*

*V. Thom.  
p.i. l.c. 49.  
n. ix.  
V. Mend.  
in Conc.  
Elib. c. 27.  
Conc. Nic.  
cap. iii.  
Sed. Sulp.  
in vita S.  
Martin.  
Hier. on ep.  
ad Nepot.*

pretence of Piety; or that they should receive from them their little presents of Habits, Ornaments, Fruits or other such like Refreshments, serving rather for Delight than use, which had any appearance of Voluptuousness and Decency.

But upon the main, the Sanctity of the Ecclesiasticks was as yet very great; and though there were always among them Persons who had their weakness, and their Passions, the generality of them led Lives extremely Virtuous and Exemplary. The World likewise did them Justice, and they were much respected. Though the Bishops made no great figure in the World as to Temporal Authority, and though they lived in a plain way as private Persons, without any thing of Worldly Pomp or outside shew of Grandeur; yet they were highly honoured, not only by the People, but also by the Magistrates, and even by the Princes themselves. I have before taken notice of the Honours which *Constantine* paid to the Fathers Assembled in Council at *Nice*. The Emperor *Maximus* made St. *Martin* with one of his Priests eat at the same Table with him, and the Empress his Wife served them with her own Hands.

As the Custom of the *Romans* then was to give to all Persons in place, different Ti-



*V. Panair. in Not. Imp. \*Illustris*  
*Glorious, Renowned, most Eminent.*

Titles, as of *\*Illustris, Gloriosus, spectabilis, Clarissimus*, which were stated Appellations according to the Rank and Dignity of the Persons to whom they were apply'd; so they gave to the Bishops that of Holy or blessed, to which they added that of Pious, Religious, belov'd of God, and such like. These Titles were so Appropriated to Bishops, that they were not omitted even in the Processes made against them; as in those against *Nestorius* in the Council of *Ephesus*, and against *Dioscorus* in the Council of *Calcedon*. They were given to *Heretical* Bishops; and in the Conference at *Carthage*, *St. Austin* makes no scruple of saying, the most Holy *Emeritus* and the most Holy *Petiliam*, though though they were *Donatists*. It had been an affront to them to have denied them these Formalities of Respect.

*V. Bar. Not ad Martyr. x. Jan.*

The name of *Papa* or *Pope*, that signifies *Father*, which is more especially used when one would express the Endearments of that Relation, was of a long time common to all Bishops of the *Latin* Church, and in the *Greek* Church is still given to all Priests: They were treated as Lords, and nothing is more common in the fourth and fifth Ages than such like Supercriptions as these, To the most Holy, most Pious, and most venerable Lord *N. Bishop*

— It was as I shewed before a common  
 prac;

practice for People to prostrate themselves before them, and kiss their Feet: So that 'tis not a thing so much to be wondered at, that these extraordinary Honours should be performed to the Supreme Bishop, to whom the faithful have in all Ages paid a singular deference, since the other Bishops treated the Pope as their Father, and he treated them again but as Brethren; as is still done. For the Church of *Rome* hath been of all others the most constant in preserving her ancient usages.

The regard which the Temporal Powers had for the Bishops, gave them Authority to take upon them the Protection of Widows, Orphans and all others whose case rendered them Objects of Compassion: Particularly they made use of their Interest to beg the Lives of Criminals. Not but that those Holy Persons had a Zeal for Justice; but they knew there would be always too many left to be made examples of Severity, and they laboured for the Salvation of Souls. Whether the the Condemned had been Christian or not before, the favour procured to them by these hands could not but be a Powerful motive to draw them over both to Repentance and Baptism. And this Delight in shewing Mercy made even the Heathens themselves in Love with the Church.

*V. epist. Innoc. i. inter epist. August.*

*V. Epist. liv. August. ad Maced.*

The

August. E-  
pist. 100.  
133. 134.  
139. edit.  
Nov.

Epist. 134.  
n. iii. iv.

August. E-  
pist.  
lxxxiii. ad  
Vincent.

Sever. Sulp.  
lib. ii. Ba.  
ron. an. 385.

L. v. L. xi.  
Cod. de He-  
ret.

The Church interceded also in the behalf of her own Enemies. We have many Epistles of St. *Austin* where he begs the favour of the Magistrate on the behalf of *Donatists* convicted of horrid Violences and even of Murders committed on the Catholics. He pleaded that it would dishonour the sufferings of the Murthered to put to Death the Authors of them; and that if they could find no other penalties for them but Death, they would thereby bring things to that pass that the Church, who delighted not in the Blood of her Adversaries, would not dare to demand Justice against them. This was a general Rule, that the Church was never to seek the Death of any Man. They were content that Christian Princes should correct or overaw Hereticks by Banishment or pecuniary penalties, but they were to spare their Lives: And all the Church declared their Abhorrence of the proceeding of the Bishop *Ithacius* who prosecuted the Arch-Heretick *Priscillian* to Death. But the Bishops could not always obtain the Pardon they desired for these sort of Offenders, no more than they could for others. The Princes to preserve the publick Peace, Enacted the Penalty of Death against Hereticks, and their Laws were sometimes put in Execution.

In

In the midst of all these honours and the high esteem the Bishops and Clergy then had, it, was still required of them to observe the rule of Poverty. In *Africa* the Clergy how eminent soever they might be for their knowledg in the Word of God, were enjoined to labour with their Hands, to Till the Ground or follow some other honest Employment, whereby they might (without any prejudice to their Function) get enough for their own Subsistence, that is to say, a Competency for Food and Rayment. But this one would take to be understood rather of the lesser Clerks than of the Priests and Deacons, who were sufficiently employed other ways. Though some of them also follow'd this Apostolical Counsel. But from what Fund soever the Clergy were supported, they were obliged always to shew themselves examples of a Christian Frugality and Moderation. The Same *African* Canons give it in Direction to the Bishops, that they should content themselves with a moderate Table, and Ordinary Furniture. This Rule St. *Austin* faithfully observed. One may guess what was his ordinary way of living, since *Posidius* who hath given us the History of his Life, observes this particular of him: That besides Pulse and Herbs, he would sometimes, when he had Strangers to entertain

Conc. iv.  
Carth. c. lii.

V. Thomass.  
Disc. P. 1.  
l. 9. c. ix. x.  
xi.

Paul. ep. i.  
in fi.

Sulpit. de  
vita S.  
Mart.

Hom. 9. in  
Epist. ad  
Philem.

Conc. An-  
tioch. ii. an  
270.

ertain, have some Flesh-meat and Wine brought to his Table. St. *Paulinus* in the same Age (he who had quitted so vast an Estate) had his Table served with Earthen Dishes and Wooden Porringers. Of St. *Martin* tis observed, that in visiting his Diocese he commonly Rode upon an Ass, and was but very meanly Habited. St. *Lupus* of Troy, St. *German* of Auxerre, St. *Hilary* of Arles were admired for their Abstinences and Fasting. Of St. *Epiphanius* of Pavia, 'tis Recorded, that he never used the Bath, Eat no Supper, and lived only on Herbs and Pulse. In the East St. *Basil* Eat only Bread with a little Salt, Drank nothing but Water, and never wore above one Coat. St. *Gregory Nazianzen* lived much after the same manner. The Enemies of St. *Chrysostom* grounded one part of their Calumnies against him, that he Eat by himself and lived very Reserved. And he himself Censures a certain Bishop for wearing Silks; riding on Horseback, and being attended with a large Retinue of Servants; and that though he had a convenient Habitation, he could not yet forbear Building. Which were almost the same Accusations with those that had been laid against *Paulus Samasotenus* in the Age before. He was charged with living Voluptuously, Eating to Excess, being too richly

richly habited, and that he was attended, as he passed about the City, with a numerous Train; more resembling the Pomp of a Magistrate than the Plainness of a Bishop: And yet he was Bishop of *Antioch*; the Capital of the East, and the third City in the World. They were so Accustomed to see their Bishops Modest and Humble, that Malicious and Indiscreet People from thence took occasion to pass harsh Censures upon such as were not altogether so reserved. St. *Chrysostom* complains of too hard measure the Bishops met with upon this account. *There are some, saith he, that think much a Bishop should go to the Bath, that he should Eat or Dress as other Men do, that he should have a Servant to Wait on him or a Mule to Ride upon.* So *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who was a Heathen and strangely devoted to the Old Superstitions of the Pagan Religion, forbears not to expose and aggravate the visible difference there was at the end of the fourth Age in the manner of their Living, between the Pope of Rome and the Provincial Bishops. As if it were so strange a thing and so much to be wondered at, that the Bishop of the Capital City of the World should have his Coach to carry him from one Quarter to another of so large a City, that he should go well Habited, and keep a good Table, to en-  
ertain

Hom. ii. ep.  
ad Tit. in

Amm. Ma-  
rc. lib. 27.

Voiture

tain the greatest Persons of the Empire. 'Tis certain however there were at the same time in the Provinces, Bishops who by the Frugality of their Tables, the Poverty of their Habits, and Modesty of their Looks rendred themselves amiable both in the sight of God and Man. And thus much doth this Heathen Author himself own and declare of them; and that there were the like examples in the great Citys, is plain by the Instances I have given besides many more that might have been added.

XXXIX.

The Riches of the Church.

THAT which makes this moderation of the Bishops yet more remarkable, is the vast Riches of the Church, which immediately followed the ceasing of the Persecutions. One would hardly believe what I shall say on this Head, though the thing its self be never so certain and well attested. All the Lives of the Popes from St. *Silvester* and the beginning of the fourth Age to the end of the Ninth are full of Presents made to the Churches of *Rome* by the Popes, by the Emperors and by some Private Persons. And these were not only gifts of Gold and Silver Plate, but Houses in *Rome*, and Lands in the Country; and that not only in *Italy*, but in divers Provinces of the Empire. I shall relate no more than what was offered by

by *Constantine* as *Anastasius* reports it from the Ancient Memoires that remained to his time.

He tells us that the Emperor built and ornamented many Churches, as first the *Constantinian* (the same with the *Lateran*) where he bestowed these gifts; viz: A Silver Tabernacle of two thousand twenty five pound Weight; having in the front of it our Saviour seated in a Chair, five foot in Height, weighing one hundred and twenty pound; and the twelve Apostles each of them five foot high, and weighing fourscore pound a peice, with Crowns of the purest Silver. On the back side was another Image of our Saviour five foot high weighing an hundred and forty pound, and four Silver Angels of five foot each, and an hundred and fifteen pound weight, set with precious Stones. He gave also four Crowns of the purest Gold, that is circles with Candlesticks in them, ornamented with twenty Dolphins of fifteen pound each. Seven Altars of Silver of two hundred pound weight, seven Patins of Gold of thirty pound each, forty Calices of Gold of one pound each, five hundred Calices of Silver of two pound each: one hundred sixty Silver Candlestick, forty of which weighed each of them thirty pounds, the rest twenty pound apiece.

R And

And many other Vessels. In the *Baptistery* the Cistern or Font was of *Porphyry*, overlaid with Silver to the weight of three thousand and eight pounds. In it was placed a Golden Lamp of thirty pound weight, in which were burning at once two hundred pounds of sweet Oyl; a Golden Lamb of thirty pound weight pouring out the Water; the Image of our Saviour of the purest Silver, five foot high, and of an hundred sixty two pound weight, and on his left Hand a *St. John Baptist* in Silver of an hundred pound weight, and seven Silver Harts casting forth with Water, each of eight hundred pound, set with two and forty rich Stones. All that he gave to the Church and to the *Baptistery* amounted to six hundred seventy eight pound weight of Gold, nineteen thousand six hundred seventy three of Silver: And there going but twelve ounces to the *Roman* pound, the whole amounts to one thousand and seventeen Marks of Gold, and twenty nine thousand five hundred Marks of Silver, which comes to about twelve hundred thousand Livers, besides the Make or fashion; counting the Mark of Gold at three hundred Livers, and the Mark of Silver at thirty Livers. Besides all this *Constantine* gave to the same Church and *Baptistery* in Houses and Lands to the Yearly value of thirteen thou-

thousand nine hundred thirty four Sols of Gold which comes to more than fourscore thousand Livers *per. annum*. Counting the Golden Sol but at six Livers. And all this was given to that one Church, the *Lateran*.

He built seven others also at *Rome*, that of *St. Peter*, *St. Paul*, the Holy Cross of *Jerusalem*, *St. Agness*, *S. Laurence*, *St. Peter* and *St. Marcellinus*. He made also great presents to that of *St. Silvester's* founding. He caused to be built also one Church at *Ostium*, another at *Albanum*, another at *Capua*, and another at *Naples*. What he gave to all the Churches in Gold and Silver Plate amounted to one thousand three hundred fifty nine Marks, and four ounces of Gold and twelve thousand four hundred thirty seven Marks of Silver, which comes to near upon seven Hundred Fourscore Thousand Livers besides the Make, The Yearly Revenues, with which he endowed them amounted to seventeen thousand seven hundred and seven Solls of Gold, that is, to more than an hundred thousand Livers, and to the value of above twenty thousand Livers in divers sorts of Perfumes which the Lands in *Egypt* were obliged to furnish in Specie, and that counting them, but according to the price they now bear, which is incomparably less than

than what it was then. The Church of St. Peter, at Rome for example, had Houses in *Antioch* and the adjacent Country, it had Estates belonging to it at *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, at *Alexandria* and throughout all *Egypt*; nay, it had them lying as far distant as in the Province of *Euphrates*, and part of the Lands stood charged to supply the Church with a certain quantity of the Oyl of Nard, Balm, Storax, sweet Cane, Saffron, and other precious Drugs for the use of the Censers and Lamps.

*V. Euseb. de  
vita Const.  
lib. iii. c. 34.  
35, &c. c.  
50. lib. iv. c.  
58, 59.*

*ibid. iv. 28.*

To these we may add the Churches that *Constantine* and St. *Helena* his Mother caused to be built at *Jerusalem*, at *Bethlehem*, and over all the *Holy-Land*. That of the twelve Apostles, and the others which he founded at *Constantinople*; for he was the Founder of all the Churches there; that at *Nicomedia*, that at *Antioch* which was proportionable to the Grandeur of the City: To these we may subjoin the Liberalities he bestowed on the Churches throughout the Empire. We may add further the Donations of the following Emperors, the Gifts of the Governours of Provinces, and of all the other great Lords who became Christians; the Benefactions of those Religious Matrons who quitted great Estates to embrace Christian Poverty, as St. *Paula* at *Rome*,  
and

and St. *Melania*; St. *Olympias* at *Constantinople*, and many others; to these in the last place we may reckon the Gifts of the Bishops, between whom there was a Pious Emulation of exceeding each other in adorning and enriching their Churches. After all this one may judge how rich the Churches of the Capital Cities were in those large Provinces which we now count for great Kingdoms: Thus we may see that the Church of *Alexandria* was prodigiously rich in the time of St. *John* the Almoner, by the account we have of his Pious management of those vast Revenues and the large Charities he bestowed out of them. We may see in St. *Gregories* Epistles what pains and trouble the Patrimonies of the Church of *Rome* gave him, dispersed abroad in so many Countries, in *Sicily*, in *Spain*, in *France*; the care he took that the Slaves who were employed in the Tillage of them should be well used, and the Revenues applied to the Relief of the Poor of the Countries where they lay. Nothing of all this will appear incredible to any one that is the least acquainted with the Grandeur and Wealth of the *Roman* Empire, where it was a common thing for private Persons to Bequeath to their Friends whole Towns Inhabitants and all; besides, there were great Estates Appropriated to the Worship and Or-

*Vita Greg.  
per Jo. Di-  
ac. lib. ii. c.  
55, &c.*

*F. de instr.  
& instrum  
leg.*



namenting of the Idols: There were great sums yearly expended upon their Sacrifices, Plays and other Ceremonies of the false Religion. It was easy for a Christian Government to enrich the Church with what used to be flung away upon these Vanities. But one of the grand Funds out of which the Churches were endowed, were the Christians Estates which had been Confiscated during the Persecution.

*Euseb. vita  
Const. ii. c.  
35, &c.*

*Con. Anti-  
och an. 341  
can. ult.*

*Thom. Dis-  
part i. l.iii.  
c. xi.*

These Goods and great Estates belonging to the Church, were entirely at the disposal of the Bishops: But the holy Prelates of those times were so far from being over pleased with their Possessions, that they complained of them, and would have been glad to have seen those Days again in which the Church stood in need of no more than the daily Offerings of the Faithful, for the supporting of their Poor, their Clergy, and for all the other occasions of the Church. St. *Austin* frequently offered to restore his Church-lands, but his People would not accept of them. St. *John Chrysostom* upbraids the Christians of his Time, that they had by their Covetousness and hard Heartedness forced the Bishops to procure settled Revenues to their Churches, lest their Virgins, Widows and other Poor should Perish for want, if (as in the Primitive times) they had

had nothing else to depend upon but casual Alms: From hence (saith he) come *Chrysost. in* two inconveniencys; You your selves live *Mat. xxvii.* unprofitably, and the Priests of God are busied in concerns Foreign to their Function. *10. hom.* And a little after. You make Stewards, Farmers and Overseers of your Bishops; and instead of minding nothing but the saving of your Souls, they are every Day disturbed with what ought to be the business of Receivers and Treasurers: And again, Your uncharitableness makes us Ridiculous, for we are obliged to leave our Prayers, instructing the People and other Parts of our Holy Employment, to be always treating with Vintners, Corn Merchants and those who sell other Provisions. So that People have given us names which are fitter for Men of a Secular Character. Yet they found out ways to disengage themselves from the trouble of managing their temporal Affairs. They entrusted the care of them at first with Arch-deacons, and afterwards with Stewards appointed for that very purpose. And to ease themselves even in the works of Charity its self, they procured of their Princes to have established in every City a defender of the Church and the Poor, whose Office it was to protect the Church, and solicit for the Poor.

*Conc. Car-  
thag.*

XL.  
Hospitals.

A CONSIDERABLE part of the Goods of the Church was employ'd in the founding and maintaining of Hospitals: For now it was they began. The Government of the *Greeks* and *Romans* went a great way in making Laws against Idleness, and keeping their Countries clear of sturdy Beggars and Vagrants; but we find no pulick Provision for such poor Creatures as were able to do nothing: They thought it was better for them to dye than live unprofitably and wretched; and that if they had any thing of Spirit or Courage in them, they would fairly dispatch themselves. The Christians aiming principally at the saving Peoples Souls, neglected none of them; and those who were most abandoned by others, they thought best deserving of their Care. They provided not only for their own Poor, but even for those also of the Heathen. This *Julian* the Apostate testifies of them, (not without shame) commanding Hospitals to be erected, and Contributions raised for the maintenance of the Poor, after the manner of the Christians. There were two ways of relieving the Poor, the one by distributing Alms among them, leaving it unto themselves to shift for their Lodgings. To this purpose there was in every quarter of *Rome* a place called the *Diaconium*, which was a sort of

of Office for the management of these Alms. A Deacon always resided there, and received from time to time a certain sum of Money to be faithfully distributed by him amongst the Poor, for which he was accountable. The other way of relieving the Poor, and that far better too, was both to lodge and to feed them together in Common: For this purpose as soon as the Church had its Liberty, there were several Houses of Charity built, all which we call by the common name of Hospitals, but in *Greek* they had different Appellations according to the different Qualities of the Poor for whom they were appointed.

The House for Infants exposed, or otherwise wanting that Relief, was called the *Brephotrophium*; that of Orphans, *Orphanotrophium*, the *Nosocomium* was an Hospital for the Sick; *Xenodochium* Lodgings for Strangers or Passengers: And this is that which in *Latin* is properly called Hospital, an House of Entertainment for Strangers. The *Gerontocomium* was a retreat for Aged Persons. *Ptochotrophium* was common to all sorts of Poor: But there were also such Houses of Charity before they had these names given them; There were many of them quickly erected in all great Cities. It was ordinarily some Priest that had the Overseeing of them.

As

*Julian. ep.  
ult. Asacio.*

*Baron. ad  
Martyrol.  
viii. Aug.*

*V. l. 19. l.  
21. Cod. de  
Sacros. Ec.  
cl.*

*Aug. in Jo.  
matt. 97.*

Baron. ad  
31. Dec. &  
27. Jun.

Martyr. 25  
Jun.

As at *Alexandria* St. *Isidorus* under the Patriarch *Theophilus*. At *Constantinople* St. *Zoticus*, and after him St. *Sampson*: There were also some private Persons who erected Hospitals at their own Expences, as St. *Pammachius* at *Porto*, and St. *Gallicanus* at *Ostia*. This St. *Gallicanus* was a *Patrician*, and had been Consul; and 'twas a sight that drew Spectators from all parts to see a Person of his Rank and Quality, one that had worn the Triumphal Ornaments, and could have boasted of his Friendship with the Emperor *Constantine*, to see I say such a Person washing the Feet and the Hands of the Poor, waiting upon them at Table and giving the Sick all sort of assistance. The holy Bishops thought no expences too great that were bestowed upon so good purposes: Besides, they took great care about the Burial of their Poor, and the Redemption of Captives who had been taken by the Barbarians, as it often happened in the Declension of the *Roman Empire*: For these two last sorts of Charity they sold, even the communion Plate, notwithstanding the Privilege of Appropriation. The instance of St. *Exuperius* Bishop of *Tholose* is very remarkable, who reduced himself upon this score to such a degree of Poverty, that he carried the Body of our Saviour in a little Basket, and his Blood in a Calice of Glass. And St.

Hieron. ad  
Rustic. c. 28  
Martyr. 28  
Sept.

Paul.

*Paulinus* Bishop of *Nola* having sold all, made himself a Slave to ransom the Son of a certain Widow; so that those vast Treasures of the Churches, the Gold and Silver with which they were Ornamented, were deposited in the nature of a Trust till pressing Occasions, as a publick Calamity, a Petilence, a Famine, or the like, should require it; every thing gave place to the providing for the living Temples of the Holy Ghost. They redeemed also such as lived in Slavery at home, or within the Empire, especially such as were Christian Slaves to Pagan or Jewish Masters.

Gregor. iii.  
Dialog. c. i.  
ii.

Jo. Diac.  
vita S.  
Greg. lib.  
iv. cap. xlii.

IN the last place, it was after the Church had gained its Liberty, that they began to found Monasteries, Under the Persecutions many Christians had retired into the Deserts: Principally those adjoining to *Aegypt*; and some passed the remainder of their Lives in them, as St. *Paul*, who is reckoned the first Hermit. St. *Anthony* having for some time lead the Ascetique life near the Place of his Nativity, withdrew himself afterward into the Desert, that he might with greater freedom and security pursue his religious Exercises, upon being removed out of the Reach of all Temptations which might be occasioned by Society. He was

XLI.  
Monas-  
teries.

Hier. vita.  
S. Pauli.

the

the first that gathered Disciples together in the Wilderness, and there obliged them to live in common. They were now no longer called simply Ascetics, though in effect they led the same Life; but went by the name of Monks, that is to say, Solitaries, or Hermits; to wit, those that inhabit the Wilderness. Those who lived together were termed *Canobites*; and those who having lived a long time in common and there learnt to conquer their Passions, and afterwards retired to a more absolute Solitude they called *Anchoretas*. And yet the *Canobites* themselves lived very Solitary, seeing no Soul but their own Fraternity; being at the distance of many Days Journey from all inhabited Places, in sandy Deserts, whither they were forced to carry all necessities, even their very Water. Nor did they so much as see one another save only in the evening and in the Night at their stated hours of Prayer, spending all the Day at work in their Cells either alone, or two and two together, and always in profound Silence. Besides, as in those vast Solitudes, they were not streightened for want of Room, so their Cells stood at a considerable distance one from another.

St. Anthony, St. Hilarian, St. Pacomus, and the others that followed their  
Ex-

Examples did not pretend to introduce Novelties or outdoe all that ever went before them. Their design was only to keep up the exact practise of the Christian Religion which they saw every Day more and more declining. They always proposed the *Ascetics* that went before them for their Examples. As in *Aegypt*, those Disciples of St. Mark, who (as *Cassian* relates) lived in the Suburbs of *Alexandria*, close shut up in their Houses, spending all their time in Praying and Meditating upon the Holy Scriptures; labouring with their Hands all Day and never eating but at Night. They proposed for their imitation the Primitive Church of *Jerusalem*, the Apostles themselves and the Prophets. Twas not an Affectation to make themselves admired for the extraordinariness of their Methods, but an honest intention of leading the lives of good Christians. This one may see through the whole Rule of St. Basil, which is indeed no more than an Abridgement of the Duties of a Christian who would lead his Life according to the Precepts of the Gospel, and which he lays down in general to all sorts of Persons. He saith, for example, as to Habits, that a Christian ought to content himself with such Cloathing as is sufficient for Decency, and to defend the Body against Cold and the

*Cass. ii.  
Inst. v.  
18. Coll. v.*

*Hier. ad  
Paulin.  
item ad  
Rustic.*

*S. Basil reg.  
fas. n. xxi.*

the other injuries of the Air ; but to be as little incumbred as possible : And therefore to be content with one Garment both for Day and Night, a thing in the Country where he lived not impracticable. There is very little in his Rule which is peculiar to Monks separate from the rest of the World.

That which was singular in the Monks was their Renouncing of Marriage, and the Possession of Temporal goods, and their Separating themselves from conversation with the rest of the World, either of the Faithful themselves or their nearest Relations. As to the rest they acted but the part of good Laicks living by their Labours, in silence, and exercising themselves in getting the Mastery over their Passions by degrees : So that having, as St. Paul expresses it, like resolute Combatants *Striven for the Mastery*, and Striven *Lawfully*, they might arrive to that Purity of Heart which might render them fit to see God. Upon these Principles were all their Methods and Practises founded. St. Chrysostom gives us a Memorable History of a Young Man, whose Mother was desirous that he should become a good Christian, and prevailed with a Vertuous Monk to take him into his Tutition. This Holy Man to Instruct him more perfectly in the Duties of Religion, causes

Chrysost. ad  
fidel. patr.

Cass. Instit.  
v. c. 12. 16.  
&c. 6.  
c. 7.

1. Cor. ix.  
25. 2 Tim.  
ii. 5. Ev-  
p. 100. 105.  
Matth. v.  
viii.

Ad fidel.  
patr.

causes him to practise in Private all the exercises of the Monastick Life, without making any open Shew or Profession of it, and still leading in appearance the common Life. Their continued course of Fastings tended in the first place to subdue the Sin of Gluttony ; and then to prevent the Temptations of Impurity, to render the Soul more free and Serene, and in a proper condition to apply herself to Spiritual things. However they used discretion in the matter, and took care to keep the Body in sufficient Plight to bear up with their continual Labours and short Sleeps, without prejudicing their Health ; so that they lived to a very great Age without any Sickness or Diseases. In the Lives of the Fathers we meet with a great number of these Monks that lived to fourscore or fourscore and ten Years ; some to an hundred, and others more. These examples we chiefly meet with among the *Ægyptan* Monks, who were the most admired for their Wisdome ; and who, after mature Deliberations upon long Experience, came to this conclusion, that the Dyet of the Monks should be limited to the eating of only two little Loaves a Day of six ounces a piece, and that not till after three a Clock, and to the drinking of nothing but Water. Solitude they used as a remedy against the In-

Cass. In-  
stit. lib. v.

Idem. Coll.  
ii. c. 1. 7.  
&c.

Cass. Coll.  
ii. cap. xix.



Incitements of Impurity and Avarice, endeavouring as much as was possible to loose the very Remembrance of objects that might excite such Temptations. They also conquered Avarice by their extream Poverty and by sticking close to their Rule of having nothing of their own and of distributing to the Poor out of the gains of every Days Labour, all that remained over and above their own Subsistence. And so considerable were these Alms (as St. *Austin* reports) that they Fraighted whole Vessels with them. Lastly, they combated the passion of Anger by their Silence, and by keeping such Company as obliged them to bear with one another; sloth they encountered by continuall Labours; Sadness, by Prayer and singing of Psalms; Pride and Vanity, by the practise of an absolute Obedience and severe Mortification.

There were also some Monks that wrought in Husbandry, and for hire in the Harvest and Vintages, promiscuously with other Labourers: But the more perfect of them found their Thoughts too much scattered by these Employments, and shut themselves up in their Cells making Rush-Mats, Wicker Baskets, and such like things, which did not take them off from Meditating upon the Scriptures, and keeping their Souls always intent upon God.

There

*De Mor.  
Eccl. i. c.  
lxvii.*

*V. Chrysof.  
Hom. lxxiii.  
in Matth.*

*Cass. Col-  
lat. xxiv. de  
Mortific. c.  
iii. iv, &c.*

There were none of them without some Business or other, and the least was Transcribing Books: However the greatest Part of them did not give themselves to Study, and many of them could not so much as Read. This way of living being so poor, so laborious and mean to outward appearance brought them under the contempt of Libertines, and even of some Christians themselves. They made lewd Jest of them; they sometimes proceeded to violence, even so far as to strike the Monks, to drag them out of their Cells, and haul them before the Magistrates: But all this served only to make their Humility and Patience more remarkable. They were so much loved and respected by all understanding People, and not only by the Vulgar, but even by Persons of Quality; nor by the Laity only, but also by the Priests and Bishops themselves; that those of the greatest Sanctity and Capacity among them were often thought fit to be advanced to some Publick Ministry in the Church, or even to the Episcopal Dignity. Then they quitted their Monastery and returned to the Commerce of the World; living the same Life with the rest of the Clergy. We see nothing of solemn Vows in these first times. St. *Chrysostom* speaks of a Monk's returning to the World as a thing of Freedom: He advises a Father to

*Chrysof. ad-  
vers. vitup.*

*V. Cass. xvii.  
Collat. 21.  
ad fidel. pa-  
tr.*

S

en-



engage his Son in this Holy manner of Life, as soon as he should come to be in a state of Sinning, at about ten Years of Age, and to let him continue in it for the Space of Ten or twenty Years, till he was perfected and established in goodness. He himself quitted the Monastick Life at the end of five Years, for the recovery of his Health. But one may see by the Repri- mand he gives his Friend *Theodorus*, how much those were to blame, who through lightness, disgust, or any other unwarrantable motive took leave of their vertue and a Monastick Life together. The Church put them under Pennance, but as for Civil Punishments they had none but the disgrace of their Inconstancy.

The Sanctity of the Monastick Life appeared with such a Lustre, that within a short time there spread all over the East many thousands of Monks and Monasteries. The Rule of St. *Pacomus* alone had under it fifty thousand Monks, distributed into several Houses under the Government of one Abbot, who all met together at *Easter* to Celebrate the Christian Passover. The Founding of these kind of Monasteries met with no difficulty; they had neither Lands nor Possessions to make them envy'd: There wanted neither Permission, nor Assistance to those that had a mind to forsake all and retire into unin-

+ *V. Chrysost. bom. in ep. ad Timoth. August. de Mor. Eccl. i. c. lxvii. Hier. pr. ef. in reg. S. Pacom. & epist. ad Eustoch.*

*Chrysost. ad fid. patr.*

habited places, and build themselves little Wooden Cells there, or of Reeds, or what the place afforded; to confine themselves to Silence and Labour, and so to live not only not burdensome to any, but to be very serviceable also to the publick, by those good Works and Charities before mentioned. These Monasteries did in time so multiply, and spread themselves, that there were of them also in inhabited places, and in the Neighbourhood of great Cities. Thus it was not thought reasonable that in plentiful Countries, as *Italy*, *Sicily* and *Greece*, they should be debarr'd the Privilege. But in what publick places soever they were, the Monks still kept to their solitary way, confined themselves to their Cloysters, and punctually observed their Rule of Silence.

When they were near enough to the Cities, they came to the publick Church to hear the Instructions of the Bishop, and to participate of the Holy Mysteries. They had their place allotted them separate from the rest of the Congregation, as the Virgins and the Widows had theirs: But this hindred them not to have in their own Houses Oratories, where at the stated Hours they all met together and Prayed in common. They that lived farther from Towns, had among them Priests to perform Divine Service and Administer the

*Act. Conc. v. can. 33.*

*Ambros. ad virg. laps. c. vi.*

Sacraments; and at last it was found convenient that every Monastery should have in it one Priest at least, and one or two Deacons; and this Priest was often their Abbot. Thus having no occasion to go abroad, they were shut up in their Monasteries as the Dead in their Sepulchres: This was the pretence that Arch-Heretic *Eutiches* made for his not appearing at the Council of *Chalcedon*.

Con. Chalced.  
Act.

+ There were also Monasteries for Women, or Nunneries in the Deserts, where they abode within Convenient distance of the Monks to receive mutual assistance from each other by their Neighbourhood, & yet so far asunder as to avoid all danger and Scandal. The Monks built the Nuns their Cells, and helped them in their most laborious Works; the Nuns made the Monks Cloaths, and did them other such-like Services. But all this Commerce of Charity was managed by some aged Persons appointed for that purpose; none else being suffered to go near the Nunneries. There were also many of these Nunneries founded in Cities, where all the Virgins Consecrated to God, lived in Community, who before lived separate in private Houses. The Nuns of *Aegypt* and *Syria* cut off their Hair for cleanliness sake; in other places they kept it on: The practice of Antiquity in these Cases being different.

Hier. epist.  
48. ad Sab-  
binian.  
Baron. ad  
Martyr. 20  
Sept.

The

The Bishops who made their Clergy live in common, took their Method of living from the Monks; and as much as the active Life of the Clergy would permit, they conformed themselves to it, so that these Communities were often called also by the name of Monasteries, and in time they were quite confounded one with the other. In the Fifth Age the greatest part of the Bishops and Priests of *Gaul*, and of the West, practiced the Monastick Life and wore the Habit. The Pope *St. Gregory* was taken out of a Monastery, where upon quitting the grandeur of this World he had shut himself up; but notwithstanding his Advancement, he still kept to the Monastick Life, and filled his Palace with Pious Monks, out of whom he made many of his great Bishops, and among the rest *St. Austin* the Monk, with the other Apostles of *England*.

Thom. Disc. +  
ii. part. l. i.  
c. 34, 35,  
36.

Jo. Diac.  
lib. ii. c. xi.

The true use of the Monastick Life was to improve and perfect such unspotted Souls as had preserved the Innocence of their Baptism; or such Converted Sinners as desired to Purify themselves by Repentance. 'Twas for this end they received into their Monasteries Persons of all Ages and Conditions: Young Children, whom their Parents were for placing early out of the danger of the World; Old Persons, who desired to end their

S 3.

Lives

Lives Religiously; Married Men, whose Wives also had consented to the same way of Living. In the Rule of St. *Fructuosus* Arch-Bishop of *Braga*, we find Regulations for all these Persons. They who for their Sins were obliged by the Canons to do Penances of many Years, found it undoubtedly much more Commodious to pass them in a Monastery, where the example of Living in Common, and the Consolations received from those more advanced in Years, might somewhat ease their Sorrows; than to Live at large under them in the wide World, where they could not avoid being singular and Pointed at. So that the Monastery became a kind of Prison or Exile, with which great Persons were often punished; of which we have examples in *France* under the two first Lines of our Kings, and in the East from the sixth Age.

XLII.  
The Monastick life compared with that of the first Christians.

THE Monastick Life is a sensible proof of the Providence of God, and of the care he hath taken to preserve in his Church to the end of all Ages, not only purity of Doctrine, but also Holiness of Life. If we call to mind what hath been said of the Christian Life in the second part of this Treatise, and compare it with the Rule of St. *Bennet*, and with the present usages of the well-regulated Monasteries,

naeries, we shall find that there is but little difference between them.

I have prov'd there that those Christians looked upon Religion as their main Concern, making all the Affairs of this Life subservient to it: And thus it is with the Monks who sequester themselves from the world that they may be at more liberty to mind the most necessary Poynt. And for this Reason they are called *The Religious*, a name common at first to all good Christians. The Monks, Asceticks and Virgins had also the name of *Devotes* given them, from their being entirely Devoted to God.

Those first Christians were very frequent both in Publick and private Prayer, coming as near as possibly they could to the Rule of *Praying always*: the Psalmody is no-where better Regulated, nor more exactly observed than in the Monasteries, where it still continues the same as St. *Benet* set it above eleven hundred Years ago. The Monks having nothing to divert them from the exercises of Religion, have kept up the Practice more exactly than even the Clergy themselves. 'Tis supposed they reduced the Office into the form, in which it hath stood now for a long time; at least they added the *Prime* and *Complin*, which at first were only private Prayers for every Christian

3 *Instit.*  
iv. vi.

Family, or every Monastery to make use of at their own Houses, to sanctifie the beginning and ending of the Day. *Cassian* declares that this Establishment was but new in his Days. In all this the Canons are to be esteemed as a sort of Monks; and so indeed in the beginning they were, being then all of them Regulars. The Primitive Christians received the Communion very often; so do the Monks for the most part. *Ruffinus* tells us the Disciples of St. *Apollonius* Communicated every Day. The Monks kept up for a long time the Ancient custom of having the Eucharist always lying by them to Communicate themselves, when they should want a Priest to Administer it. 'Twas perhaps for want of this Precaution, that some continued for the space of two whole Years without receiving the Sacrament.

S. *Basil. ep.*  
289, ad  
*Casar.*  
*Patr.*

*Chrysost.*  
*Hom. xvii.*  
*in Epist.*  
*ad Hebr.*

*Reg. S. Ben.*  
c. xlviii.

Those Primitive Christians spent much of their time in Reading the Holy Scriptures: The Rule of St. *Benet* prescribes the same to his Monks, and more particularly that all the time of Lent, and on all Sundays, they should apply themselves wholly to this Exercise. For on other Days, they spent much of their time in the labour of their Hands, of which Practice some traces are still remaining; though

it

it must be confessed, that of all the Monastick customs this is the least continued. Silence was necessary (as is said before) to avoid the common sins of the Tongue, so frequent amongst Men, and yet so much condemned in the Scriptures; as Reviling, evil Reports, indecent Rallery, foolish Jestings, vain, Impertinent and unprofitable Discourses; and 'tis observable that the best-Regulated Monasteries are those wherein the rule of Silence is most rigorously observed. The names of Father or Brother according to the difference of Age or Quality, were of Old the common Appellations among Christians. They were very Obedient to their Prelates and to those that had an Authority over them; they were closely cemented in Union among themselves; forward in exercising Hospitality towards their Brethren and liberal in their Alms to the Poor of what sort soever. All this we see still Practised in the Monasteries.

BUT, mayn't it be said, If the Monks pretend to no more than to live like good Christians, Why do they affect such singularities and distinctions from the rest of the World? Why do they so distinguish themselves from their Neighbours in matters which are Indifferent? What means

this

XLIII.  
The Reasons of the External singularities in the Monks.

this singularity in Habit and Figure? Those Peculiarities in their way of Eating, their hours of Sleep, the manner of their Lodging, in a Word, all that which makes them look as if they were a different Race of Men from the rest of Mankind, another sort of Christians scattered among all other Christian Nations? And why such Diversities amongst the different Orders of the Religious? And all in matters neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word of God. Doth not all this look as if they had a mind by their Extraordinary out-side, to strike the imagination of the People, thereby the better to gain Respect and Advantage? This is what manye imagin within themselves, and some speak out expressly. But these Rash Censures proceed from their want of knowledg in Antiquity; for if one will be at the pains of examining into these Exterieur Distinctions of the Monks, and the other Religious, he'll find that they are only the remains of ancient Manners which have been throughout the course of many Ages faithfully preserved by them, while in the rest of the World they have undergone wonderful alterations.

Reg. S. Ben.  
c. iv.

To begin with their Habits. St. Benet saith that the Monks ought to be content with

with a *Tunique*, a *Cowl*, and a *Scapulary* Vilia videntem tunicato for them to work in. The *Tunique* without a Cloak had a long time been the Habit of the meaner sort of People; and the *Cowl* was a kind of Hood worn by Peasants and Poor Labourers. This Accoutrement for the Head being a good fence against the Cold, became afterwards common to all sorts of Persons, and so continued in these parts of Europe till about two hundred Years ago. Not only the Clergy and Men of Letters, but also the Nobility and Courtiers had their Capuches and Hoods of several sorts and fashions. The *Cucullus* mentioned in the Rule of St. Benet served instead of a Cloak. Thus what the *Cistercian* Monks call the Cowle, (the name importing as much) and the *Benedictines* the *Frok*, they are of the same Original, being both derived from the Old *Cucullus*. St. Benet gives them also a *Scapulary* to work in: It was much wider and shorter than they wear it now, and served, as the name implies, for the carrying burdens upon their shoulders, and to preserve their *Tunique*. This *Scapulary* had its Capuche or Hood as well as the *Cucullus*. And these two Habits were not worn both at the same time; the *Scapulary*, when they were at Work in their own Monasteries; the *Cucullus*, or Cowle, at Church, or when they went

Hor. i. Epist. vii. Pullo Ma-  
vius alget  
in cucullo,  
Mart.

abroad. Afterwards the Monks came to look upon their *Scapulary* as the most Essential part of their Habit; so that they they never left it off, but wore their *Frock* or *Cowle* over it.

It appears therefore that *St. Benet* gave his Monks no other Habits, but such as were then commonly worn by the Poorer sort of People in his Country. They were scarce any other way Distinguishable than by an entire uniformity among themselves, being all of them clothed exactly alike; which was but necessary, that so the same Suits might serve indifferently for all the Monks of the same Convent. Now 'tis no wonder that in the Course of eleven hundred Years, there should be some Diversity found, as to the colour and shape of their Habits, between the same order of Monks that follow the rule of *St. Benet*; considering the different Countries into which they spread, and the several Reformatations made of them in several places. And as for the other Religious Orders that have been founded within five hundred Years last past, they have kept to the same Habits which they found in use in their Times. The greatest part wear no Linnen Shirts, which to us now-a-Days seems a severe Prohibition. But the wearing of Linnen Shirts was not of common use till long

long after *St. Benet*. In *Poland* they are not worn to this Day; and throughout all *Turkey* they use no Sheets, and but half undress for Bed, lying in their Drawers; tho' even before the use of Linnen-Sheets, 'twas the common custom to go into the Bed Stark naked, as is still done in *Italy*. And therefore their Rule obliges the Monks to Sleep in their Cloaths, without putting off so much as their Girdle.

As for their Diet I have before observ'd, that it was an ordinary thing not only for Christians, but also for the most rational Persons among the Heathens themselves to live on Pulse and Fish, and that 'twas a common custom with them to have some Book read to them as they sat at Meals. I have also observed that Christians did keep many private Fasts, besides the more solemn ones of the Church, and that they made long Graces both before and after Meat. So that herein *St. Benet* hath prescribed nothing singular or extraordinary; on the contrary he was so indulgent as to permit his Monks two different Dishes of Meat and a little Wine. The Hours of Eating and Drinking observed by the Monks were the same all the World over, till this last Age. They Dined at nine or ten in the Morning, as the greatest part of labouring People still do; and Sup't at

*Reg. S. Ben.*  
c. 39. & 40.

*Phil. Com.*



*Conf. ord.* at six at Night. Those civil Regulations concerning the *Couvrefeu*, and the limited Hours of working at the Forge, shew that they reckoned the hours of rest and sleep from eight of the Clock at Night to four in the Morning, which is the most equal Rule of taking the middle of the Night for sleep, and losing as little as is possible of the Day.

That the *Dormitory* should be without Partitions of Cells, as is directed by the Rule of St. *Benet*, is no more than what their Living-in-common in a strict Sense properly requires; for this is properly to Live in common, to Sleep all in the same Chamber and Dine all in the same Hall: Besides, by this means their Poverty appeared more undisguised, and their Vertue was better guarded. It was easy for their Superior with one Glance of his Eye, to observe whether any thing passed there contrary to Modesty; besides, their Rule farther required, that there should be Lights always in the *Dormitory*, and that every single Bed which consisted only of a Mat and a Coverlet, should be placed in full view. This fashion is still kept up in Hospitals, and 'tis certain was very ancient among Christians; and the Cells likewise (or every one's having his little Apartment to himself) are of very ancient usage. But with the first Monks

Monks of the Deserts, these Cells were only little Hutts or Cottages where they dwelt separately, such as those of the *Carthusians* and the *Camaldoli*, and though there lodged two or three Monks together under the same Roof, yet they changed not their name; and therefore we find that the lesser Monasteries, which we now commonly call *Priories*, passed for a long time under the name of Cells; they were also called *Casa*. Both the one and the other of these names seem to have been taken up from the lodgings of Slaves: For the Monks in their way of living, chose to imitate the condition of the poorest and most despicable of Mankind.

Besides, methinks I can trace in our Monasteries the Model of the old *Roman* ways of Building, as 'tis described in *Vitruvius* and *Palladius*. Their Church, that it might be free and convenient for Seculars, was always in the front of the Monastery, and seems to have succeeded in the stead of the first Hall, which the *Romans* called the *Atrium*: From thence you pass into a Court surrounded with cover'd Galleries, to which they ordinarily gave the *Greek* name of *Peristilium*; and this is the proper Cloister it self, into which was a passage from the Church, and out of which you are led into the other parts of the House; as the Chapter-house which was

was for *Exedra* of the ancients ; the *Refectory* or *Triclinium*, and the Garden which ordinarily stands behind all the rest, which was the way of the ancients.

But let that be as it will, certain it is, that those Holy Persons, who formed their Rules for the Monks, had no design of introducing Novelties, or of distinguishing themselves by the singularities of their Methods. That which makes the Monks appear now so strange and extraordinary, is the change of other Mens Manners ; as the most ancient buildings are become singular, because they are the only Fabricks left us that have stood for so many Ages. And as the more judicious any Architect is, so much the more curious is he in finding out the imperfect remains of those old Buildings, as well knowing that that the Art of Building hath in these last Ages been recovered only by the imitation of these excellent Models : So Christians ought exactly to observe the Practice of the most regular Monasteries, to give them a view of the best examples of a life truly Christian. I know there is scarce any thing which the length of time hath not somewhat impaired ; so there is no old building which time hath entirely spared, and of many-a-one there remains nothing but mishapen Ruins ; and yet by taking an exact view even of these Ruins, and

and examining the very least Fragments of these precious Antiquities, and then by comparing them with their Histories in the Books of the Ancients ; we come at the same time both to understand the true proportions of the whole Fabrick, and the true sense of the ancient Writings. After the same manner great use might be made of our Enquiries into the Monastick practices, if together with them we also read the Rules of the Founders of the several Orders, the old Canons, the writings of the new Testament, and the lives of the Saints of all Ages. In the mean time it cannot be denied but that the Monasteries have been the Repositories of all sorts of Antiquities : The greatest part of those old Manuscripts were found in them, by the help of which, Learning hath been restor'd in these last Ages : In them were preserved the Works of the Fathers, and the Canons of the Councils. We discover every day in the Statutes and Customs of ancient Monasteries, Ecclesiastical Antiquities of the greatest Curiosity : In a word, the Evangelical Practice in the Cloysters hath been all along kept up to its primitive Purity, while in the World it hath been every Day changing from worse to worse ; and 'tis this Declension of Religion I am now entring upon.

Part IV. HAVING represented the Behaviour of the ancient Christians, I think my self obliged now to add the principal Causes of the prodigious difference there is between *Their* way of living and *Ours*; and so great is that difference, that to many (I doubt not) this Account will appear as strange as those Relations our Travellers give us of the *Indians* and *Chinese* manner of living; and the more Ignorant will scarce have Faith enough to give Credit to it, because every particular is not proved home to them, and the Testimonies set down at length: But the whole stands upon Authorities well known to Persons of Learning and Reading. We will proceed therefore to take a general view of the progress of this decay.

When *Constantine* had declared for Christianity, the Converts came into it, in shoals; and what the Prophets had of old Predicted concerning the Church was literally accomplished; that she should be established on the top of the Mountains and that all Nations should flow in unto her, to learn from her the Law of God, and the Rule of living. On the one side men with their own Eyes beheld the extraordinary Miracles which were every day wrought at the Tombs of the Martyrs; the holy Lives of the greatest part of Christians, and the invincible force of this

this Religion, against which three hundred Years cruel Persecution had prevail'd no farther, than to give it the deeper rooting. On the other side, Idolatry, and the Fabulous *Theology* of the Poets was long before so exposed by the Philosophers, that almost all the Men of Wit and Sense among them believed nothing of it, but kept up the Religion of the People only for their own Interests; and therefore they readily quitted it, when it was no longer supported by publick Authority; and most of them turned Christians: Others out of a Libertine Opinion or Practice e'en continued as they were without having any Religion at all; either because they could not bring their understandings to submit to the obedience of Faith, or that they would not quit their Debauchery or forgo their ill gotten Goods, or the unjust methods of raising their Fortunes.

There were scarce any Pagans left but of these two sorts; the gross ignorant vulgar, who were governed by Custom only and who were not capable of any thing higher than the impressions of Sense; and some affected Wits who to shew their parts and Learning, and out of a blind Veneration for Antiquity, were resolved to maintain the cause of Paganism, and to that end underpropped it with the Allegorical explications of some Philosophers

Fables. These were the Platonicks of those times, far from the good Sense and Solidity of *Plato* and the ancient *Academicks* his Disciples: These fanciful Wits picking up what was most weak in the Doctrin of *Plato*, and mixing it with that of *Pythagoras*, and with the Mysteries of the *Aegyptians*, patch't up a kind of Religion, which at the bottom was founded upon Magick, and which under the pretence of Worshipping good or bad Spirits authorized all sorts of Superstitions. Such was the Religion of *Julian* the Apostate, and we see somewhat of it in the Maxims of *Apuleius* in *Porphyry* and *Jamblichus*. But there were few that penetrated into these subtilties, and Paganism sunk every day more and more into Contempt.

Among so great a multitude of new Christians it was impossible that some should not pass in the Crowd, drawn in only by Temporal Considerations, upon the hopes of making their Fortunes under Christian Princes, Complaisance to their Friends and Relations, the fear of displeasing their Masters; and in a word, upon all those Motives which now a Days make Hypocrites and false Zealots: But these for the most part contented themselves with the bare Character of *Catechumens*; and being loath to submit themselves to that

August. in  
Jo. vi. 26.  
tract. ii.

that strictness of Life which Christianity requires; they were for deferring their Baptism as long as they could, and often to the point of Death, that so they might to the last continue the unhappy liberty of committing Sin, without Subjecting themselves to the Discipline of Penance. Others proceeded even to Baptism, and were not in their Hearts true Converts. Some light inquisitive People were drawn in purely out of a curiosity to know the Mysteries which were revealed to none but the Faithful. Their Superstition made them greedy after Religion, and ambitious of being initiated into all sorts of Ceremonies, and to participate in every thing which bore the name of Sacred, without distinguishing the true God, or the true Religion. Among so many pretenders to Christianity, what caution soever the Prelates could use; They were but Men, and it was impossible they should not sometimes be mistaken.

Many even of those that were Christians in good earnest, grew every Day more and more remiss. The fear of Martyrdom was removed, and Death did not now appear to them so near at hand. Their security from outward danger betrayed them into that great hazard of Laying aside their Watchfulness. Even in the state of persecution, during the Intervals

T 3.

of

V. Aug. de  
Catechiz. c.  
xvii. Cyr.  
Hier. Pro-  
catech.

Leo. Serm.  
6. in Epiph.  
c. iii. Cyr.  
de Lapsis.  
Dionys. A.  
lex. apud  
Euseb. vi.  
Hist. 34.  
Euseb. viii.  
Hist. c. ii.

of their Troubles, there was perceived a sensible abatement of Christian fervour: Of this the Fathers very much complain; ascribing the hottest Persecutions to this remissness of Zeal, when ever they enjoyed the least Respite from their Enemies. How must it then have been with them in a sure and settled Peace, when twas not only not dangerous to be a Christian, but also Honourable and advantageous? The Princes and Magistrates being Converted to the Faith, still maintained their Secular Grandeur; and were never the less good Christians for looking after their temporal concerns, and exercising their Charges: So the common sort of Believers seeing Religion and Worldly greatness so fairly reconciled in these examples, began to think there was no such great danger in Honours, Riches, and other enjoyments of this Life. Thus the Love of pleasure, Covetousness and Ambition revived in them. The World was now become Christian, yet still the World was the same. They began now to Distinguish between Christians, and Saints, and Religious. We find St. *John Chrysostom* frequently complaining of it, that his Hearers, to excuse their Earthly mindedness and too great Solitude about the affairs of this World, were wont to tell him; We are no Monks, we have Wives

*Chrysost. ad  
fidel. patr.  
Idem Hom.  
i. in Matth.  
Mor. in fi.*

Wives and Children to provide for, and Families to look after: As if the Christians of *Rome*, or of *Corinth*, whom St. *Paul* calls Saints, and to whom he ascribes so high a Perfection, were not Married Persons, and led in the concerns of this World, the same common life with other Men.

To this, add the Corruption of Nature that turns Food into Poyson. The Church had in her publick Offices some kind of Observances more agreeable to outward Sense. These were easily abused to the Flesh, and applyed to wrong Ends, contrary to the Institution of them. The Sunday Rejoycings, and those of the other Grand Solemnities exceeded sometimes the Bounds of Sobriety and Christian Moderation. So that in the fourth Age they were obliged (as I have before observed) to abolish the custome of making Entertainments at the Feasts of the Martyrs, and the Clergy were also Prohibited from being present at those of Marriages. *Origen* hath well observed how difficult a thing it is to reconcile sensible Pleasure with Spiritual joy. The Body is a Slave, which if too much Humour'd and Pamper'd with Food, Sleep, or other such like Indulgences, will presently become Insolent and grow upon us; Usurp upon the better part, take off the

*Basil. Orat.  
de Ebriet.*

*Aug. ep.  
xxix. nov.*

*Orig. cont.  
Cels.*

the mind from applying it self to Spiritual things, and weaken its power of bearing up against Temptation. Nor can the Spirit maintain its dominion over the Flesh, but by a severe Conduct and continual Application. I speak here of the same times I have just now described in the third part; and do rip up in them also the least Faults, that so I may the better trace out the very first beginnings of the Declension of Christian Piety, without designing in the least to invalidate what I there said of the Manners of the Church in general, or of its Discipline, which was still preserved in its full vigor: And above all the Sanctity of their Clergy was extraordinary. However it must be granted there were some Prelates too sensible of the great Honours that were paid them. And some also were accused of having misemployed the great Estates of which they had the Disposal. One may see what Complaints were preferred to the Council of *Chalcedon* against *Dioscorus* and *Ibas* upon this account. I believe there can scarce be found any of the Orthodox Bishops of those times justly charged with the same Reproach. But as the *Arrians* and other Hereticks had also their Bishops and Priests; Their Passionate Conduct lessened in the eyes of the World, the Honour of the order it self. 'Twas

*Conc. Chalcedon.*  
*AR. iii. c.*  
x.

a great scandal to the *Pagans* and weak Christians to see Persons that had such Venerable Titles, Masters of so little Temper, and disputing with such heat against the other Bishops and Priests, outraging them with Injuries and aspersions both in their Discourses and Writings. Coming to the Court, Solliciting the favour of the Prince to support their Party. For the Hereticks omitted none of these Practises. One might have seen the Monks, transported with a mistaken Zeal, leaving their Solitudes, flocking to the Cities, raising Seditions, and committing unheard of Insolencies. These disorders Reigned principally in the East, where the Spirits of Men being generally of a more hot and inflexible Temper, their Passions presently took fire, and carried them to the highest Excesses. In the mean time this mightily sunk in the eyes of the World, the respect due to Persons Consecrated to Religion, and consequently the honour to Religion it self.

The outward appearance of vertue in the Heathens, was another Stumbling-block to the Weak. For some there were that led lives Morally good: Were true to their Word, Just in their Dealing, abhorred Fraud and Avarice; in a Word, observed all the Laws and Rules of civil Society. Pretending that it was suffici-

*Aug. in Io.*  
*tract. xlv.*



ent for a Man to Live up to the light of Nature, and follow the Law of right Reason, without troubling themselves with those disputes, which divided the Christians. As if the Christians did not profess to follow the sovereign Reason, that is, the Word Incarnate. These wise Men of this World looked upon Faith as an instance of weakness a prejudice of the Understanding; and reckoned Mortification, a rigorous chastity, forbearing of *Spectacles* and Profane Diversions, as a piece of Superstition. Now, though Christianity was the Religion of the Prince, yet the number of Pagans was still so great that there was no hindering of them from Writing, and Speaking, and Dogmatizing publickly. This freedom was a remainder of the Antient Pretensions of the Philosophers; of which the Hereticks also well knew how to make their advantage. All that the Emperors could do in these first times, was to shut up the Temples, prohibit Sacrifices, and the other publick ceremonies of Idolatrous Worship. Nor could that be done without great Murmurings of the Pagans. We know what Efforts the Senate made under *Valentinian* the Younger to have the Altar of Victory Restored. Some times they proceeded even to open Violence against the Christians, who publickly

V. Aug.  
Contra. ad-  
vers. leg &  
proph.

Cod. de  
Pagan.

Ambros. ad  
Valentin.  
de relat.  
Symmach.  
Epist. xxi.

lickly opposed their Superstitions: And therefore we meet with some Martyrs, even under the most Christian Emperors. The Emperors themselves retained some Formalities of Paganism, which in the bottom were no more than empty Titles. As the Name and Habit of the *Pontifex Maximus*, or High Priest, which gave them a great Authority over all the Magistrates. So also they had the Title of Divinity continued to them, and every thing appertaining to it: As their Palace, their Treasure, their Demesnes, their Letters, their Purple; to all which was commonly added the Epithet of Sacred and Divine. This Stile was necessary to keep up the Veneration of the People, nor did any of the most Holy Christian Bishops ever scruple the use of it. In the mean time the Pagans, as to the generallity of them, grew every Day more and more Corrupt. All that hath been said before of the Vices that Reigned in the World when the Gospel made its first appearance, was still the same; and excepting some few of extraordinary Force and Elevation, and the Philosophers I just mentioned, there was neither among the *Greeks* nor the *Romans*, any remainder of Probity which could come up to a Counter-Balance. Thus matters stood when the Empire sunk in the West; and though it con-

Martyrol. i.  
Jan. xvii.  
Mart. xiv.  
Aug.

Baron. an.  
312.

Numen,  
domus di-  
vina, Sa-  
crum ara-  
rium Sa-  
cr patrim,  
&c.

continued longer in the East, yet it was only till it met with the like violent Shock. There was neither Discipline in their Armies, nor Authority in their Commanders, nor dispatch in their Councils, nor Conduct in their management, nor Vigor in their Youth, nor Prudence in the Aged, nor Love for their Country, nor any concern for the Common-good; every one minded himself only, his own Pleasures and private Interests, and basely either Neglected or Betrayed the Publick. The Romans Effeminated by Sloth and Luxury, defended themselves against the Barbarians by the help of Barbarians themselves, whom they hired for pay to serve in their Armies: They were Drowned in Pleasures and Delights, and valued themselves upon a false Gallantry, which had nothing solid at the bottom; so that the measures of their Iniquities and Abominations being filled up, God in his righteous Judgment executed upon them that exemplary punishment foretold by St. John. Rome was often taken and Sacked by the Barbarians; the Blood of so many Martyrs with which she had made her self Drunk was avenged; and the Empire of the West fell a Prey into the Hands of the People of the North, who divided it into a set of new Kingdoms.

V. Amm.  
Marcell.  
lib. 14. lib.  
28.

Apoc. 14.  
c. 18.

The

The Christians living among a People so perverse and so extremely corrupt, I mean these later Romans; it was difficult to keep their Vertue from declining, especially being no longer Strangers among the Infidels, as in the times of Persecution, having nothing now to guard against but their Friendship and Caresses: 'Tis no wonder therefore that we find the Fathers of the Fourth Age upbraiding Christians with the grossest Vices. St. Austin dissimiles not the Matter, but plainly lets the Heathens disposed to turn Christians, know before hand how great Sinners they were like to meet with even among the Christians themselves; that so they might be the less surprized at them, and consequently the less Scandal'd. *Among the Herd of them, (saith he) that fill our material Churches, you will find some Riotous, some Covetous, some Fraudulent Persons; you will see there some Gamesters, Adulterers, Debauchees, Play-haunters; others who apply themselves to Diabolical remedies, Enchanters, Astrologers, Diviners of all sorts. And yet all these pass for Christians. He frankly confesses to the Manichees that there were even among the professors of the true Religion some Persons Sottishly Superstitious, others so addicted to their vicious Passions that they never so much as thought of their Vows made to God.* He

V. Salvian.  
de gubern.  
Dei. lib. vi.  
c. vii.

August. de  
Catech. c. v. +  
vii. 17. 25.

Aug. de  
Mor. Eccl.  
c. 34.

Aug. in ps.  
99. c. 12 &c

V. Chrysost.  
in Matth.  
hom. 61.  
Idem de  
compunct.  
Idem ad fi-  
del. patr.

Aug. En-  
chirid. c.  
lxxx.

He often speaks to the same purpose in many of his tracts against the Donatists, where he clearly proves to them, *That the Tares must continue together with the Wheat till the time of Harvest*; that is, the Day of Judgment: And elsewhere he censures the Injustice of them who approve or condemn all Christians and all Monks in general for the good or evil of some particular Persons. We find the like instances of the corruption of Christians in St. Chrysostom and the other Fathers of these times; to what purpose then (may it be objected) served the publick Pennances and Excommunications? To purge the Church of a great many Vices though not of all. To the imposing of Penance it was necessarily required that the Offender should desire it, or at least that he should voluntarily submit to it, so that he was obliged to acknowledge his Offence, either by a free Confession of it himself, or by acquiescing in the Accusation of others. Excommunication was for those who would not accept of Penance, though they were convicted, either by their own Confession or by legal Proofs, or by notoriety of Fact. And yet after all, the Prudent and Charitable Bishops did not hastily proceed to this last extremity. They often admonished the Convicted Offender, and put him in mind of the desperateness of his Condi-  
tion

tion upon persisting in Impenitence; they earnestly exhorted him to get out of that dangerous State; they spared neither Threats nor Intreaties to overcome the hardness of his Heart; they lamented over him before God, and obliged the Congregation to Pray for him; they waited in expectation a long time, imitating the Patience and long Suffering of the Father of Mercies; in a word, 'twas not till they had tried all the Methods of Charity, that they proceeded to this sad Remedy; and that with the grief of a Parent, who to save the Life of his Son is himself forced with his own Hand to cut off his Arm.

Const. Ap.  
ii. cap. 41.

But as for those whose Crimes were private and concealed, either known only to God, or impossible to be proved, there was no remedy against them: They could not deny them entrance into the Church, nor participation of the Sacraments, if they were so Sacrilegiously impious as to approach the holy Mysteries. In former times the Persecutions were sufficient Trials to separate the Chaff from the Wheat. But when they ceased, Hypocrisy was carried on to the last breath of Men. In the meantime the Church was a great sufferer by these lukewarm and corrupt Christians; their evil Discourses and evil Examples were a scandal to Re-  
ligion

ligion; and their loose Conduct had a pernicious effect, especially upon their own Families. They did but ill instruct their Children, and yet brought them to Baptism: And this defect of Family Education was of great Consequence in these first Ages, where we cannot find that there was any Catechism publickly appointed for the Instruction of Christian Children.

XLV.  
The Incursions of the Barbarians, and their manners.

Hier. in. l. cap. v. in fi. & al.  
Idem epist. de fun. Nepotiani in fi. & ad Gerontiam & ad Agnechiam.

THE Ravages of the Barbarians who overturned the *Roman* Empire, had as pernicious an influence upon the Manners of the Church as the Corruption of the later *Romans*. The Gospel which is the highest Reason, rejects every vicious disposition, as being inconsistent with it: Neither the affectedly Ignorant, the Knavish, the Savage nor the Slothful can be good Christians; Barbarity and Cruelty are as incompatible with true Religion as Luxury and Effeminacy; Wars and Hostilities are as contrary to Piety, as they are to Justice and all good Order: So that Religion suffered deeply under those horrid Confusions brought upon the World by the Savage Nations of the North; who like a Flood breaking in upon the *Roman* Empire over run it all. St. *Ferome* and the other Fathers who lived in those times have left us a lamentable Description of them. A Barbarous

Enemy destroying all before him, their Towns taken by Storm, and their Countries lying at the Mercy of the rude soldiery. 'Tis easy to imagin with what distraction all Mens minds were filled; what would become of their Lives and Fortunes, of themselves and their families; how to secure their Persons from Captivity, and their Wives and Daughters from Violation. These were pressing Considerations, and violent Temptations to them to neglect their Spiritual concerns: A Man must have been endowed with a very Heroick Resolution to maintain the Constancy of his Mind in the midst of the horrible Slaughters, the dismal desolations, and all the other terrible Ravages of a Brutish Conqueror. We have still extant the Letters of St. *Basil*, and the more ancient ones of St. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, where we may see into what grievous Crimes the Christians were betrayed by the Incursions of the Barbarians into *Cappadocia*, and the Pennances thereupon enjoined them.

When the *Vandals* wasted *Africa*, that which most sensibly affected St. *Austin*, was as (*Possidius* relates it) the hazards and loss of Souls by it. He saw (saith that Author) the Churches forsaken of their Priests and Ministers; the sacred Virgins and the other Religious scattered abroad in the wide World; some sinking under their Torments

ments, others put to the Sword, others led into Captivity; where having lost the honour of their Chastity, the Integrity of their Conscience, and the Orthodoxy their Faith, they remained Slaves to their Brutal and unmerciful Enemies. He saw the sacred Hymns and Praises of God given over in the Churches, and the very Buildings themselves in many places levell'd with the ground. That the Sacrifices and Sacraments were no longer sought after; and they that did desire them could not easily meet with any capable of Administring them. That the Bishops and Clergy whom God had graciously preserved from falling into the Hands of the Enemies or gave them the means of an escape after they had been taken were spoiled of all, and reduced to the last degree of Beggery, without any ones being able to relieve them according to their Necessities. By this Instance one may imagin how it was with them in the other great Provinces in Spain, Gaul and

V. Conc. i.  
Bracar. & Illyrium. What means were there left under these Confusions either for instructing the People or breeding up Priests and Preachers? How could the Bishops visit their Flocks, or meet in Councils to fill up the vacant Sees, and maintain the regularity of Discipline? The Church hath good reason in all her Prayers to beg of God the blessing of Peace and Tranquillity, without which the Publick exercise of Re-

Religion must needs fall to the Ground.

'Tis true the Barbarians were converted. The *Franks* turned Christians, the *Goths* and the *Lombards* of *Arians* became good Catholics; but still they remained Barbarians: I call *Barbarism* here, that disposition of Mind by which Men govern themselves not by Reason, but by Passion or by Custom. We have remarkable instances of the Power of Custom in the *Iroques* and the other People of *America*, whom we call Savages. We have scarce ever heard of any Nation less given to Women, or less Subject to the Passion of Anger; they are very Patient, great admirers of Justice and Gratitude, Liberal and Hospitable: But to this very Day it hath been almost impossible to make Christians of them, except those who have been brought up among the *French*, and from their Infancy familiarized to our Customs; not that they want Reason or Understanding in those things they are bred to, but they are incapable of receiving new Impressions. They can form to themselves no notion of one God the Creator of the Universe, and Governour over all Nations: They cannot apprehend the reason why there should be but one only Religion in the whole World; they cannot be affected with the hopes of a life to come; nor comprehend what we mean when we tell them

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them of an happiness purely Spiritual; and much less do they understand us when we declare to them the more sublime Mysteries of Religion. They will patiently hear what he have to say without contradicting us: but when we have said all we can, one may plainly perceive they are nothing moved at it: If we put them upon Baptism, 'tis an ordinary thing with them to desire it, if they find it will be for their Interest, or if they can but get some little Toy by it; but as soon as they have gained their ends they think no more of their Vows; they return to their own People, follow their old trade of eating the Flesh of Men again, and torturing their Enemies to Death. There are other Barbarians absolutely stupid, as the *Negroes* and *Cafres*, in whom we find no Sentiments of any Religion at all; such dull heavy Souls that nothing but what is sensible and Palpable can enter into their understanding; all these poor Creatures must first be made Men before they can be made Christians.

I will not say that the *Franks* and other People who Conquered the *Romans* were Barbarous to this degree; but it is certain that they had nothing of Learning among them, nor any use of Letters; that they apply'd themselves never to Arts nor Agriculture; that they lived by Blood  
and

and Plunder, and were so fierce and Savage in their Natures, that the *Romans* were even scared at the very sight of such horrid Figures. We see a great deal of Inconstancy and Inequality in their Conduct, which seems to be the proper Character of Barbarians: For the principal effect of reason is Constancy and Consistency in a Man's Designs and Actions; 'tis not to act like Men to be given up to diversity of Passions, as objects shall present themselves. It must be owned there appears much Irregularity and Self-contradiction in the Lives of *Our* first Christian Kings; *Clovis* and his Sons after him discover on the one side much respect and Zeal for Religion; but on the other, they fell into many notorious Acts of Injustice and Cruelty. The good King *Gontram* whom the Church hath placed in the number of her Saints, amongst many works of Piety, was guilty of gross Faults, and *Dagobert* that famous Founder of Monasteries, led a very vicious Life; not but that there were even in those Days Bishops of an Apostolick Sanctity and Vigour; but they chose the lesser evil, and shew'd a better inclination for Christian Princes though weak and imperfect, than for Pagans and Persecutors of the Church. One sign that they did not easily confide in the Barbarian Converts is, That for the space  
of

viz french. +

Mat. Rom.  
28 Mart.



Conc. Tolet.  
iii. an. 589.  
cap. xi.  
V. Gregor.  
Pastor. iii.  
admon. 31.  
Isidor. sent.  
16.

Two hundred Years we scarce meet with any Clergy that were not of the *Romans*, as appears by their Names. We find at the same time great complaints against the too great easiness of some Priests in admitting People to Penance more than once, which seems to have taken its beginning from the Levity and Inconstancy of the Barbarians.

XLVI.

The mixture of the  
*Romans*  
and the  
Barbari-  
ans.

THESE two Nations, the *Romans* I mean and the Barbarians, incorporated by degrees; but as in the mixture of two different Colours, each one loses its property, and there ariseth a third which rubs out the former, so the Barbarians were softened and Cultivated by their Commerce with the *Romans*; but the *Romans* themselves became more gross and ignorant by Conversing with the Barbarians; so that in the sixth Age we may sensibly perceive a vast change in the Manners of the West. The Historians, Poets, and other profane Authors were now but little regarded by them, that they might have more leisure to apply themselves only to Religion, which yet may receive great service from these Foreign Studies, by supplying us with Critical Learning, and the knowledge of Antiquity: 'Twas for want of these helps that they were too ready to receive such Supposititious Writings as were

were imposed upon the World under the specious Names of ancient Ecclesiastical Authors; as also that they became too credulous in the beleiving Miracles. It was a thing so certain that the Apostles and their Disciples had wrought many Miracles, and that many true ones were daily performed too at the Tombs of the Martyrs; that they were not now so curious in enquiring into them, as to distinguish the true from the false. The more surprizing Relations of this nature any History contained, the more taking it was. Their Ignorance in Philosophy and the little knowledge they had of Nature, made them take all strange Appearances for Prodigies, and interpret them as the supernatural Signs of God's Wrath. They believed there was something in *Astrology*, and dreaded Eclipses and Comets as dismal Presages.

vita. Lud.  
Pii.

But what they wanted in knowledge and fineness of Parts, was largely made amends for by their Piety and solid Virtues. All the Discipline which I have before described in the Third Part continued to the Tenth Age. Christians even to the Princes and Kings themselves, were never more constant in the *Psalmody*, and all other exercises of Religion, than in those times I am now speaking of; never more regular in observing the Fasts,

V. Thomass  
Discp. ii. l.  
i c. 16. p. iii.  
l. i. c. 20.

and Solemnising the Festivals of the Church. Nothing is more famous in History than the Chappel of *Charlemain*; as he was for the most part travailing, he caused to be carried along with him Reliques, sacred Ornaments, and all other things necessary for the performance of the divine Offices, with a numerous train of Clergy made up of selected Persons. In his Travailing Chappel the service was performed with as much magnificence as in any Cathedral Church: His example was followed by the Princes that succeeded him; and herein as in every thing else these Princes were imitated by the several great Lords who built their Fortunes upon the Ruin of this Family: During all these times there were Prelates of a very exemplary Life, constant in Prayer and Zealous for the Conversion of Souls, witness those that planted the Faith in *Gallia Belgica*, *Germany* and the other remote Climates of the North. The Bishops increased daily in their Authority. Besides the dignity of their Office, and the Sanctity of their Lives, their capacity for business, and their tender Affection for the People doubly recommended them during the incursion of the Barbarians, they often interposed and put a stop to the fury of the Conquerors, to save their Cities from Plunder at the peril of their own Lives

Lives. Thus *Attila* was diverted from entering *Rome* by Pope *St. Leo*, and from *Troys* by *St. Lupus*, from *Orleans* by *St. Agnan*, but *St. Desiderius* of *Langres* and *St. Nicasius* of *Reims*, lost their Lives for their Flocks, having their Throats cut by the *Vandals*. When these Barbarian Kings turned Christians, the Bishops made part of their Councils, and were the most trusty of their Ministers: They did what they could to recommend Gentleness and Clemency to them, often interceding for Criminals, and making use of several methods to this purpose: 'Twas for this end they were so very careful to have the rights of *Sanctuary* maintained; a Privilege which at first the Veneration of Martyrs, and afterwards of some illustrious Saints, had procured to the places of their Sepulchre, as in *France* to that of *St. Martin*. Hence also ('tis plain) came in the Custom of putting out Peoples Eyes who ought to have suffered Death; they thought to put them out of a capacity of doing more mischief in the World, and yet give them time to Repent; but sometimes they shut them up in Monasteries.

The Bishops also made use of the credit they had with their Princes, to restrain them from Acts of Injustice and Oppression, to procure the Relief of the Poor, and the common good. To these ends and pur-

Martyr. 23  
Mai. 14.  
Dec.

*V. Anastas.* purposes they frankly employed the Riches of the Church. He that reads what good Works the Popes have done, from the time of St. Gregory to Charlemain; both in repairing the Ruins of Rome, and Reedifying not only the Churches and Hospitals there, but likewise the Streets and Aqueducts; as also preserving all Italy from the Violence of the Lombards, and the Avarice of the Greeks: He that reads the Lives of St. Alnolphus, St. Eligius, (St. Audoenus) St. Ligarius, and the other Prelates who had a great hand in the Management of the publick Affairs in those Days: He may see that Christianity is so far from interfering with the Interests of the State, that it is indeed the surest foundation of true Politie, as being the best means of Uniting Men together, and making them serviceable to each other in Society.

+ This great Reputation of the Bishops and Abbots insensibly drew them in to share in the Temporal Power. They were Lords, and had the same priviledges with Lay-Peers, but still with the same Incumbrances: As to furnish out Soldiers for the Service of the State, and often to lead them in Person. The different Nations were in time sufficiently intermixed to make the Clergy either of Barbarians or Romans. But an intire alteration in

in their Behavior, was much more difficult. 'Twas very hard to restrain them from Hunting, and the exercise of Arms after their Ordination; especially when by the orders of their Prince, they were obliged to appear in the Field. Nor indeed can it be denied, but that those Temporal Seignuries annexed to Spiritual Dignities were a great cause of the decay of Discipline.

IN the East they never had any of these Temporalities. But there were other causes there which produced as bad effects. The great Heresys, which took their Rise and Course in those parts, had set the Wits of many too busily on Work, and shaken the Foundation of their Faith. Nestorius on the one side and Eutiches or rather Dioscorus, on the other, had vast numbers of followers. Their disputes + were endless, and from disputing they often fell into Quarrels and Seditions. The Clergy and Monks, who were the most Zealous, brake forth into the greatest Heats; and when these last above all others, espoused the Quarrel, so far as to quit their Solitudes and flock to the Citys to maintain the Cause of God, (as they thought) there were no methods too Lawless or Violent for them. 'Tis well known what bloody Tragedies were Acted in Egypt

XLVII.  
The Manners of the Christians in the East from the fifth Age.

*Egypt and Syria* by the opposers of the Council of *Chalcedon*.

The Emperors endeavouring by their secular authority to remedy the Evil, did only encrease it. For instead of applying themselves to see the Decisions of the Church put in execution, by Chastising and Suppressing the Obstinate and Seditious by force, they engaged themselves in the Controversy, and to end the Dispute, made use of dangerous Accommodations, determining the Point by their Imperial Edicts. And at length, encouraged by the servile compliances of the Bishops, they undertook the regulation of the Church Discipline, that is to say, they ruined it. For there was now no other rule left but the Emperor's Will and Pleasure.

Though the *Roman* Empire in the East was yet in Being; yet they were no longer *Romans* save only in Name, nor *Greeks* but in Language. 'Twas a meer Hotch Potch of all sorts of *Barbarians*, *Thracians*, *Illyrians*, *Isaurians*, *Armenians*, *Persians*, *Scythians*, *Sarmatians*, *Bulgarians* and *Russians*. So that in all History we scarce meet with a People more corrupt than these later *Greeks*. They had the Vices of the Antients, but nothing of their Wit and Ingenuity, or of their Arts and Sciences. And yet they were all Christians, and very careful to keep up the outward shew,

shew, the pomp and formalities of Religion.

When the *Mahometans* had made themselves Masters of the East, the Christians of those parts could not avoid keeping great Commerce with them. Great numbers of *Greeks* in *Egypt* and *Syria* liv'd under their Subjection. For the Conquest of the *Musulmans* (as the followers of *Mahomet* call themselves) established their false Religion, without abolishing the exercise of the Christian, in the places where they found it. Their Religion was too absurd to be received by them who had ever been enlightned with the true Faith, since it taught Men to Believe in a Man that pretended himself to be sent from God, upon his own bare Word; without any Prophecy foretelling his coming, without any Miracle to prove his Mission, or Reason to Support his Doctrine. That which got him followers, was his Addressing himself to the *Arabians*, a sort of *Barbarians* as Ignorant as himself, the happy success of his Arms, and fairly dividing the Spoils with them. The Christians had him in Detestation, and were a long time subject to the *Mahometans* before they could so much as think of being in the least reconciled to their Religion.

But

But at last they came to it; and at the end of Two hundred Years, the Empire of the *Musulmans* being now in its full Glory under *Califs*, their Religion began to appear less frightful to the Christians, who were now grown miserably Ignorant, and had their Spirits broken by a long Servitude. The Original of *Mohometism* was now grown Old enough to be concealed and set off with the Embelishments of a vast many fabulous Stories. The *Pompous Gallimafrys* of the *Alcoran*, where the Name of God appearing in every page, enough to impose upon the Ignorant. It every where Inculcates the Unity of God, and the Abhorrence of Idolatry: It speaks with great vehemence concerning the last Judgment, Hell, and Paradise; it makes honourable mention of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, of the *Apostles* and *Martyrs*, and gives high Encomiums to Jesus Christ himself. Besides it imitates several of the External Parts of Christianity. The Christians Prayed seven times a Day, the *Musulmans* Prayed five: The Christians had their Annual Fast of forty Days, the *Musulmans* have theirs of twenty nine, keeping always strict Fast till Night, as the Christians then did: The Christians keep Sunday Holy; the *Musulmans* Friday: We assemble in our Churches to Pray to God, hear

hear the Reading of the Scriptures and the Instructions of the Priest; they also Pray after their manner, in their Moschs, Read their *Alcoran* there, and hear the preachings of their Doctors. They make Pilgrimages to the Land which they Esteem Holy, and visit the Tombs of their pretended Martyrs. They give much Alms, and have Hospitals Founded among them in great numbers. They have also some sorts of Religious Persons, who live in Common, and afflict the Body after a Terrible manner. For there is no sort of Exterieur Austerities which Persons without Vertue may not Imitate, either out of Vain Glory or for Interest. But they can never bring themselves to live in Silence and Labour without being seen of Men. To do this, a Man must be a Christian.

Our Travellers Bred up in the midst of Christendom, are often affected with this outside of Religion, and those Moral Vertues they meet with amongst the Infidels; and sometimes return Home staggered in their Thoughts, and inclining to believe that all things are indifferent in matters of Religion. Under how great Temptations then must those poor Christians have layn, that were Born under the power of those Infidels, and obliged to pass their whole Lives with them; kept

kept under Oppression by them, and having no other means of making their condition Comfortable in this World, but by quitting the Faith of their Ancestors. 'Tis a wonder they were not all Perverted: And the number of Christians still remaying throughout all the Levant after a Thousand Years of Temptation, is a manifest proof of the power of the Gospel, and of the weakness of *Mahometism*.

The Christians also that were subjects to the Emperors of *Constantinople* might be easily corrupted by their Commerce with the *Mahometans*, and the several sorts of Hereticks that Infected all the East. The Judgment of the Emperor *Leo*, Author of the Sect of the *Iconoclasts* is supposed to have been corrupted by the *Jews*, and *Saracins* or the *Arabian, Mahometans*. The Emperor *Michael Balbus* passed for no better than half-a-Jew. The Young Emperor *Michael* the third, with the Lewd Companions of his Debauches, acted over in a most execrable mockery the Holy Ceremonies of our Religion, even to the Tremendous Sacrifice it self; and not long after him, I meet with another Young Emperor, *Alexander* the Son of *Leo* the Philosopher, openly Blaspheming against Christianity, and Regretting the Suppression of Idolatry. This makes me suspect, that of all Christians, the *Greeks*

were

V. Bayon.  
an. 853.  
Europal.

were the first Authors of Libertinism in matters of Religion. Not that I would be thought to fix this suspicion on the whole Nation of them, but only upon some of their great ones, and other particular Persons. For in these times, generally speaking, Religion bore up nobly throughout the whole *Greek Empire*. They had among them great Doctors, great Bishops, and eminent Religious, besides many Martyrs too in defence of the Holy Images.

IN the West the Faith was hitherto kept Inviolate. It never enter'd into the thoughts of any Man to call the principles of Religion in Question, nor was it here infected with Heresy. But Ignorance and Barbarism increased upon it. *Charlemain* did all he could to re-establish good Literature and Ecclesiastical Discipline: But the following Princes did not pursue his great designs: So that after his Days both Church and State fell into greater Disorders then ever. The Faith had been before planted in *Saxony, Bavaria*, and all the rest of *Germany*. But to secure it among those rugged Nations, *Charlemain* was oblig'd to back the Preaching of the Gospel, with the Sword and Temporal Punishments; so that there were many involuntary Conversion, which by the unhappiness of the Times was not seconded with that care,

X

which

XLVIII.  
The Manners of the West. The disorders of the tenth Age.



which was necessary to have given Religion sure rooting in a new and unbroken Soil; so that one may easily imagin there remained at the bottom, a Core of Ignorance and Spiritual Insensibility. And this perhaps is one of the Causes why Schism and Heresy have since found so easy an Access, and spread themselves all over the North. The Civil Wars which were carryed on from the Reign of *Lewis* the *Debonnaire*, turn'd all things back again, into a state of Ignorance and Confusion; even in the soundest parts of the French Empire. And to compleat their misery, the *Normans*, as yet *Pagans*, ravaged and destroyed it on every side. The *Huagarian Pagans* also, overran *Italy*; the *Saracins* for a long time hovered upon their *Coasts*, keeping them always upon the Allarm, and at last effectually made themselves Masters of *Apulia* and *Sicily*, besides *Spain* which they had now Possessed for more then an Age. So that what Reminders had been hitherto left of the Old *Roman* Manners, and Polite Genius, were now perfectly worn out.

The loss of Arts, Learning, and Civility had been the more Supportable, had not the Interests of Religion been involved in their Fate, which cannot subsist, without both Study and Preaching; the one to preserve in it the Soundness of Doctrine,

trin, the other the purity of its Morals. Religion must necessarily fall into Decay, unless the Holy Scriptures be diligently Read, Taught and Explained to the People; unless the Apostolical Traditions be preserved in their Purity, and Purged from time to time of those Spurious Additions, which the Inventions of Men make without any just Authority. All this was a thing hard to be done in the miserable times of which we are now speaking. The greatest part of the Layety neither had Books, nor indeed cou'd so much as Read. And if some of the great Lords had amongst their Rarities some Antient Authors, yet they were not able to use them being Written in Latin. The Latin was now no longer in common use; and in the French and the other Vulgar Languages, which were as yet but in their beginning, and unformed, nothing was Written (So that as they could not understand the one, they had nothing to Read in the other.) But the publick Offices of the Church, were performed in Latin; and the Scriptures were Read to the People in the same Language, but seldom Explained. The Lords, by reason of the little Wars, they continually had one against another, kept themselves close shut up every one within the Walls of his own Castle, so that they seldom

came near the Episcopal City, especially if they chanced to be (as it often happened) at War with the Bishop himself. They were forced therefore to be content with the private Masses of their Chaplains, or the Office of the Neighbouring Monasteries. But the Monks were never designed for the business of Preaching, nor could they, without their own Walls, exercise any thing of Discipline or Correction.

*Conc. Ticin.*

*an. 855. c.*

*iv.*

*Agob. de*

*priv. Sa-*

*cerd. Theo-*

*dulph. c.*

*xlv. 46.*

*Hom. Leon.*

*P. P. iv.*

In the ninth Age we find the Bishops complaining, that all the People of Estate and Quality had forsaken the Parish Churches, and earnestly pressing it upon them, that they would vouchsafe to shew themselves there at least at the solemn seasons: So they called those Feasts on which they thought all Christians obliged to Communicate, which were these four *viz. Christmas, Holy Thursday, Easter, and Whitsontide*. Nor were the common People better instructed than their Nobility, except in some Citys where they had good Bishops. For most of the Bishops themselves, Preached so very seldom, that we find there were many Canons made, requiring them to explain to the People in the Vulgar Language the Creed and the Lords Prayer, that is to say, the first Rudiments of Religion, or as we now call it, the Catechism. In this gross darkness, who could have ima-

gined

gined how far Ignorance and Credulity might improve, but that we have the Marks of it still extant in the Old Legends of those times? The Priests and Clergy were in too mean a Capacity themselves to be able to instruct others. Under those Universal Hostilities with which the World was then Harassed, they were also forced to take up Arms in their own Defence, and with Sword in Hand to secure the temporalities of the Church by which they Subsisted. Many of them were by their Poverty necessitated to betake themselves to sordid Employments; or else to travel about from Province to Province, till they could meet with some Bishop or Lord to entertain them. Being Reduced to such a Condition, how could they pursue their Studies or lead Lives Conformable to their orders. 'Twas only in some few Cathedrals and Monasteries, that a regular Course of Studying and the exact Rules of a Religious Life were preserved and maintained. All this while the Monks and Canons were notoriously degenerated from their Primitive Constitution, as one may see by those excellent Regulations which *Lewis the Debonnaire* made to reestablish their Discipline. But the Confusions following put them into a worse state than they were in before. The greatest part of the Monasteries were Plun-

X 3

der'd,

*Conc. Aquisgran.*  
*an. 817.*

der'd, Burnt and Ruin'd, by the *Normans*; the Monks and Canons Massacred or dispersed and forced to Live in the World again.

This Ignorance and Poverty to which the Clergy and Monks were reduced, so debased their Spirits, that they soon became insensible of the Sufferings of the Church in general, and little minded any thing else than how to secure their own Stakes, and Live at Ease themselves. Thus Simony came to be a common practise, Concubinage was so too, and often maintained with great Impudence; especially in Germany, where Religion ever had a weak footing. These Ignorant Clerks, who never looked upon their Ministry as any thing else than merely a Trade to get a Livelihood; who Lived every one by themselves, without applying to their Studies or their Prayers, but very much to their secular Affairs; did not understand the reasons of Celibacy, and looked upon the enjoyning it as an Insupportable Tyranny. This was the cause of the Rage they expressed against Pope *Gregory* the Seventh and all others who were for taking away this occasion of Offence.

Under these Publick Calamities one may easily imagin how miserably the Poor were neglected. How could they be relieved

leived by the Clergy who had so much a-do to live themselves? or where could they receive Alms in the times of such dreadful Famines as happened in these Ages, where we often read of Mens being reduced to feed on human Flesh? Nor was Commerce in those Days sufficiently open to have the wants of one Country supplied out of the abundance of another. The Church found it difficult to preserve its Consecrated Plate: 'Tis in these times we see the Prohibition of the use of Calices of Horn, Glass, Wood or Copper; and the permission of them of Tin: Not but that the Churches had still vast Patrimonies; but that served only as a Bait to the Princes and Lords the more greedily to invade them. The Bishopricks were often usurped by Persons altogether unqualified, who seized them by violence: Many times a Neighbouring Lord would by main force of Arms place a Son of his under Age in the Episcopal See, to Plunder the Church under his Name. *Rome* its self was not secured from these disorders, the *Petit* Neighbouring Tyrants insulted her most; and during the tenth Age we meet with nothing but violent Intrusions and Expulsions in this principal See, where till now Ecclesiastical Discipline had been all along maintained in its Genuine Purity.

*Conc. Cal-  
chut. in  
Ang. 787.  
Tribur. 893  
de consecr.  
dist. i. c. 45.*

Councils were very rarely held by reason of the difficulty of their meeting, and the universal Commotions, which were such that they could not safely pass from one City to another. Thus not only the Diseases of the Church were desperate, but even the Remedies were hard to come at. The Precedents and Rules of the former Ages were by little and little lost and forgotten: by seeing Crimes pass unpunished, Men ventured more boldly upon them; and thus they were at first accustomed to them, and at last hardened in them: It was now no longer an ordinary Distemper but a plain loss of Sense and a Spiritual Lethargy.

+ Every one was a Christian, but in such a manner as if they had thought it a bare privilege of Nature, and the Christian and the Man had been the same thing: There was now no longer a distinction. Christianity was little more than a Custom of the Country, and scarce discovered it self in any thing else than in some external Formalities. As for Vertues and Vices, there was hardly any difference between Christians and Jews or Infidels, but only in Ceremonies, which have not force sufficient for the reforming Mens Manners.

HAD

HAD not the Christian Religion been the work of God, it could never have weathered out so violent a Storm. But he hath plainly shewn, *That he* is in the midst of his Church, and that all the Revolutions of Affairs are not able to overthrow her; on the contrary, the power of the Gospel in a most wonderful manner shined forth in these miserable times. How much soever ignorance prevailed, yet all the World acknowledged and adored the *one only God*, Creator of the universe; and Jesus Christ the Saviour of Mankind: All the World believed a future Judgment and the Life to come; all the great principles of Morality were every where received and acknowledged; whereas in the most enlightened times of ancient Greece they were always doubted and disputed even by the Philosophers themselves.

'Tis true, these principles were but ill practiced; and though none called the truth of them into Question, yet few pursued them to their necessary Consequences, so as to lead their Lives in conformity to them: But the Morals of Christianity failed not to produce some good effect, even upon those that were no good Christians. It prevented a world of mischief; it softened the most Barbarious People, and made them more tractable and Humane. If they did not avoid all Crimes, yet many

XLIX.  
The preservation  
of Religion.  
Pf. xlv. 5.

V. Euseb. i.  
Prae. Evan.  
c. iii, &c.

ny of them repented at least, and did Pen-  
ance; or if they did not do that, yet in their  
own Consciences they condemned and  
disapproved of them: In a Word, Christi-  
anity in all places where it prevailed gave  
a general Tincture of Humanity, Modest-  
ly, and Decency of Behaviour, not to be  
met with any where else.

In these times of which I am now  
speaking, when the Face of the Church  
appeared so disfigured in general, yet  
there were great Doctors and great Saints  
of all Conditions in all parts of the West;  
in *France* the Monastick discipline began  
to raise up its head by the Foundation of  
the famous Monastery of *Cluny*, whose  
first Abbots, *St. Odon* and *St. Majolus* are  
renowned both for their Life and Doct-  
rine. In *Italy* *St. Romualdus* founded the  
Monastery of *Camaldoli* with many others,  
and had many eminent Disciples: We see  
in the same times many holy Bishops of  
an extraordinary Zeal for Religion, a *St.*  
*Dunstan* in *England*, a *St. Udalric* in *Ger-*  
*many*, a *St. Adelbert* in *Bohemia*, the Apost-  
le of the *Sclavi* and a Martyr: We see  
*St. Boniface* also a Martyr in *Russia*, *St.*  
*Bruno* in *Prussia*, *St. Gerard*, a noble *Vene-*  
*tian*, Bishop and Martyr in *Hungary*; and  
many others who by their Preachings,  
their Holiness, and their Miracles conti-  
nued down the Tradition of sound Doc-  
trine

trine and Ecclesiastical discipline. In the  
same Age we have amongst the Laity ma-  
ny Saints, even of the greatest Lords, as *St.*  
*Gerald* Count of *Aurillac*, *St. Stephen* King  
of *Hungary*, and *St. Emeric* his Son, the  
Emperor *St. Henry*, King *Robert*.

In these Saints, particularly those of  
the Nations newly Converted, as *St.*  
*Henry* and *St. Stephen*, we may see what  
dispositions towards Vertue were found in  
those Nations whom the *Romans* called Bar-  
barians. They were naturally great obser-  
vers of common Equity, generously Plain  
and Open-hearted, Chast, Despisers of Plea-  
sure and sensual satisfaction; lovers of Just-  
ice, Hospitality and Alms-giving. When  
these Serious, Sincere, and Courageous  
People had once made trial of the Chri-  
stian Religion, they Embraced it heartily.  
They never sought after Niceties in the  
Interpretation of it, nor were they stag-  
gered at any of the difficulties it contain-  
ed: 'Tis true their Conduct was not al-  
ways so consistent and uniform as that of  
the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*; but then  
they were greater Strangers to Dissimula-  
tion and Hypocrisy.

'Twas by the special Care and Autho-  
rity of these Holy Persons, that the Pub-  
lick Peace began to be re-established by  
making all the Lords swear to the Truce  
of God; so they called the Cessation of all  
acts

*Glab. li. v. c.*  
*i. an. 1041.*

Cap. i. extr.  
de trev. &  
pa.

acts of Hostility from *Wednesday* Night to *Munday* Morning in every Week; and all that time the Clergy, Monks, Pilgrims and Labourers in Husbandry were to be unmolested. This Truce was established in many Councils under the pain of Excommunication; such force had Religion upon the Minds of Men, when the very Foundations of civil Society were almost overthrown. In these times also we meet with frequent mention of Excommunication against those who should strike a Clergy-man; this was a thing never thought of in the First Ages. Their own Dignity was then thought a sufficient Protection to them; but they were now every Day exposed to the utmost Violences.

L.  
The re-  
stablish-  
ment of  
Piety and  
discipline.  
Glab. lib.

THE *Normans* had destroyed a great number of Churches, and others were suffered to run to Ruin upon the false Opinion they had, That the end of the World would be precisely in the Thousandth Year of our Lord; but when they saw that the World still stood after that fatal Year, they began every where to build Churches again; and that after the most magnificent manner they were capable of in that Age; always more stately than any dwelling Houses, not only of private Persons but of the chiefest Nobility: They annex'd to them large Endowments, though

though for the most part they were no more than the Restitution of Tythes, and the other Goods usurp'd in the late disorders. Great care was every where used for the recovery of Relicks, and great cost was spent in adorning them with the most precious Jewels that could be got, as we may still see in the Treasuries of the most ancient Churches. They applied themselves also at the same time to the restoring of the use of singing in Churches, and the other Solemnities of divine Service: 'Twas in the Eleventh Century that *Guido* Monk of *Arezzo* in *Tuscany* invented the Notes, and introduced that Method which is the Foundation of all modern Musick. The Religious Princes I have before mentioned, both by their Liberalities and by their Examples, favoured all these good designs. Part of the Responses which are now sung were composed by King *Robert*, and he thought it an honour to perform the Office of a Chanter publickly in the Church.

*Helgand.*  
*vit. Rob.*

I find no Age in which the long *Psalmody* was more in Vogue, as one may see by the Rule of the *Carthusians*, and the other Orders of those times. The Monks of *Cluny* brought into common use the Office for the Dead, and soon after commenced the little Office of the Virgin. Many had devotion enough to repeat over every Day the whole

*Baron. ad*  
*Martyrol*  
*ii. Nov.*

*Petr. Dam.*  
*li. 6. ep. 32.*



whole Book of Psalms. As the number of their Offices increas'd, so did also their Masses and Altars. Domestick Chappels were exceeding numerous, every Lord would have one to himself within the Walls of his own Castle; that so he might not in the War-time be without the Mass and other Services of the Church; but there was a mixture of Vanity in the Case, they loved to have Chaplains in their Family, and disdained the publick Churches where they were undistinguished from the common People. In the mean time it was impossible that this multitude of Offices Celebrated in so many different places should appear with the same advantage as it would have done had there been but one Form or Office performed and directed by the Bishop assisted by all his Clergy; as it was the manner of the Ages foregoing. Besides, the Reason of a great many of the Ceremonies was now forgotten, and yet the Forms were still kept up by Tradition; and the notion of the ancient Politeness was quite lost; so that from these times we see not the same care taken as was formerly, to erect their Churches at a convenient distance from other common Buildings, and out of the noise of publick Places: That they thought in Cities would be to lose too much Ground. We see no more of the Door-

Door-keepers, or of the other inferiour Orders of Clerks belonging to the Churches, whose business it was to keep every thing Decent, Orderly and Quiet. These Offices were either turned over to Sextons or *Virgers*, and other such-like Servants purely Laicks, or else wholly laid aside; so that the Publick Congregations in the Churches became confus'd and Tumultuous. The Lords at first began the Custom, and from them the Magistrates and other Laicks of better Quality took it, to seat themselves in the Chaire with the Clergy; and the ancient respect being once lost, the whole crowd of the People, Women and all prest up to the Altar.

*V. Sup. pag.*

But in the Eleventh Age there were abuses of far greater importance to be corrected; Simony and Incontinence. *Glab. lib. v. c. iv.* Bishopricks and Benefices were commonly bought and sold; and a great part of *V. Petr. Dam. opusc. vi. 17, 18.* the Clergy publickly entertained Concubines; nay some had the Impudence to insult the Law of the Church that requir'd the *Celibacy* of the Clergy, and declared against it as an Abuse. In opposition to these disorderly Innovators, St. *Peter Damianus* vigorously undertakes the Cause, and was supported therein by the Authority of *Leo* the Ninth, and the other Popes of those times: And the better to root out these evils, they establish't the

*Parr. Dam. opusc. 24. & 27.*

the Order of *Canons Regular*, who might shew to the Clergy the Example of living in Common, and observing the Canonical Discipline; and it was out of this Order of Men that the Bishops and Pastors were generally taken.

LI.  
Alterations in  
Penance.

*Petr. Dam.*  
*opus. vii.*  
*Gemor. cap.*  
10, 11, 12,  
&c.

*Greg. vii.*  
*lib. vii. ep. x.*

WITH respect to the Laicks it was attempted to re-establish Penances, and agreed upon what Penances should be regularly imposed according to the Canons; but many of the greatest Offenders prov'd refractory, and having the Sword in their Hands stood it out against the Discipline of the Church. And many others who were content to submit to Penance, would do it yet only after some Inauthentic Canons which very much mitigated the Rigor of it. Many that had undergone their Penance were not a jot amended by it: Nothing was to be seen but Relapses and counterfeit Penances: It is true they reckoned for every Crime a distinct Penance; so that a Man who had committed thirty Homicides, and as many Perjuries or Adulteries, had so many Ages of Penance to run through. And from hence came the indulgences of so many Years as we meet with in some *Bulls*.

As God demands not impossibilities, they who stood charged with Penances for their whole Lives, or even beyond their

their lives, could do no more than to employ in them the remainder of their days; and to that end for the greater security, to shut themselves up in a Monastery: But sometimes they were relieved by the Commutation of works of Satisfaction; and these were variously changed according to the Abilities or Zeal of the Penitent. St. *Peter Damianus* informs us that those equivalent Penances were commonly received in his time, and gives us also an estimate of them. Three thousand Stripes of Discipline could redeem one Year of ordinary Penance; and the singing of ten Psalms, continuing all the while under the Lash, made a Thousand Stripes; so that the whole Psalter made up five years of Penance; and as by vertue of the Communion of Saints, we know God sometimes pardons Sinners out of regard to the Prayers and other good works of their Brethren; there were some holy Persons in those time who devoted themselves to the doing of Penance for the sake of others.

Of these the most famous was St. *Dominicus Loricatus*, so called because he always wore next to his Skin a coat of Mail, which he never put off but when he gave himself the discipline of the Rod, and that he did so often and so roughly with so many Fastings, Watchings, Ge-

*P. Dam. vii.*  
*ta SS. Rod.*  
*& Domin.*  
*c. 8, 10, &c.*

*ib. c. 9*

nuxlexions and all other sorts of Austerities upon it, that we are almost frightened at the very reading of the account *St. Peter Damianus* who was his Spiritual director gives us of them: But the niceness and Effeminacy of our living way of finds it hard to comply with so rigorous a Devotion, of which notwithstanding we see many instances in the Saints of those times. But 'tis to be supposed that God inspired them with this extraordinary conduct in compassion to the necessities of that Age: They had to do with a Generation so perverse and refractory, that 'twas but necessary to strike their Senses with the most affecting objects. Bare reasonings and persuasions would have proved but weak Arguments to such ignorant and brutish People, bred up in Blood and Rapine; and moderate severities would have been looked upon as nothing by them who had been from their youth inured to the hardships of War, and always walked in Armour: But when they saw a *St. Boniface* the Disciple of *St. Romualdus* going bare foot in the coldest Countries; a *St. Dominic Loricatus* disciplining himself till he was all of a gore Blood; they could not imagine but that these holy Saints did indeed love God and hate Sin; They knew not what to make of mental Prayer, but they very well saw that he prayed who repeated the

the Pfaltory, and they could not doubt but that these holy Persons loved their Neighbour when they saw them doing Penance, even for the Sins of other Men: Convinced by these outward and visible Demonstrations of their Zeal, they became more Docile and Tractable: They willingly hearkned to the Preachings of these Priests and Monks, whose Lives they could not but admire; and many of them were effectually converted: Though indeed these Flagellations, going in Iron-Chains, and such like means of mortifying the Flesh were not new Inventions. *Theodoret* gives us a number of like instances in his *Religiosa Historia*, or the lives of the Religious and Asceticks; and *St. Simeon Stilites* is alone sufficient to give Authority to all these almost incredible Austerities. The Rule of *St. Columbanus* who lived about the end of the Sixth Age, kept his Monks under the Discipline of the Rod, prescribing for almost every fault a certain number of Stripes: And we see in the after Ages many Saints giving themselves voluntary Castigations.

Amongst the Instances of discipline which served instead of Canonical Penances, one of the most usual was, That, of taking a Pilgrimage to some of the more Celebrated places of Devotion, as to *Jerusalem*, to *Rome*, to *Tours*, to *Compostella*.

Conc. Cabil  
ii. an. 813.

Capitul.  
aquisgran.  
an. 787. c.  
73.

Helgaud.

In the ninth Age the many abuses which had crept into this practice occasioned great Complaints. If a Priest or other Clerk had been guilty of any notorious Crime, 'twas but taking a Pilgrimage; and by that they pretended to wipe off all blots and requalifie themselves: From hence also the Lords took occasion to lay severe Exactions upon their Subjects, under the pretence of defraying their Travelling expences; and many that had nothing of their own to live on, under this colour took the advantage of leading Vagabond lives in Sloth and Beggary: Others there were that past all their Days in roving about the World, naked and loaded with Chains of Iron, a dismal Spectacle to all that beheld them. And 'tis true that for Murders and other such-like horrid Crimes, the Criminals were sometimes obliged by way of Penance to spend their Lives in such a manner, to wander about the World, and carry along with them the marks of their misfortune: But never were Pilgrimages so much in vogue as after the end of the Eleventh Age; Wars and publick distractions being now in a great measure abated, and Pilgrims looked upon as Sacred Persons; every one was for visiting the places of Devotion, even Princes and Kings themselves. King Robert passed his Lent

Lent in Pilgrimages, and took a Journey to Rome for that purpose. The Bishops themselves made no difficulty of being absent from their Churches upon this account. *Epist. Bened. vii. ad episc. burg.*

LII.  
Croisades  
and Indulgences.

HENCE came the *Croisades* which were no other than vast Bodies of Armed Pilgrims. These Enterprises were necessary in those times. No one Christian Prince was then of himself Potent enough to put a stop to the Progress of the *Mahometans*, the Declared Enemies of all those who would not embrace their Religion. They had then for Two hundred Years Ravaged Italy without Controul; they had made themselves Masters of Sicily and almost all Spain. By the help of these *Croisades* they were driven out of all these parts of Europe, and had their Power very much broken in Egypt and Syria. In the mean time among these Military Penitents, the Discipline of the Church was but poorly Regarded, and these Enterprises how riously soever designed, proved (as far as I can guess) one of the principal causes of breaking off the force of Penance. Then it was that first came in the Plenary Indulgence, that is to say, a total Remission of all Canonical Penalties to any Man, whatsoever that would undertake the Expedition, and list himself

Villehard.  
lib. i.

into the Service of God, for so was this War called. And this extraordinary Pardon drew together vast Numbers. Those of the Nobles who understood nothing but Hunting and Fighting, were very well pleased with the Commutation, of having their irksom Penances of Fastings and Prayings, and above all the use of their Arms and Horses, which were debarr'd them during their Penance, changed into the making of a Campaign. Their Penance was a pleasure to them; nor was the Fatigue of the March considerable to them who had been always used to the Field. New places and new objects were indeed a diversion to them. There was scarce any thing of Trouble in all this, but barely leaving their own Country and being long absent from their Families. In the mean time great Journey and Company, was no very proper method for the correcting of Sinners. The Spirit of Compunction could scarce subsist with such a Dissipation of Thought as their circumstances necessarily inferred. During these long Travels, they could not but be for diverting and entertaining each other with pleasant Discourses, as the best way they had to lessen the tediousness of their March; and those that are least wise are every where the greatest Talkers. Their thoughts must needs be always in a hurry

hurry about Provisions, Lodgings, and the several Adventures they met with; they could not easily deny themselves the Liberty of eating, and Sleeping too much, as thinking such indulgencies in a manner necessary to refresh themselves after their tedious Fatigues. 'Twas impossible under these Circumstances that their Life should be regular or uniform; besides the different manners of so many Countries they were to Travers in their march to the Holy-Land: The occasions of Quarrels by reason of the diversity of Humours, Customs and Languages; the Temptations to Luxury and Intemperance in plentiful Countries, and by the conversation of People extreamly corrupt. So that it plainly appears in History, That the Armies of the *Croisades* were not only not better than other Armies, but much worse. That all sorts of Vices reigned there; both those which Pilgrims brought from home with them, and those which they found in Strange Countries: In a word, if these expeditions serv'd for the punishment of any Sins, it was not so much the Sins of the *Latin* Christians as of the Infidels and Schismatick Christians, to whom they were indeed the terrible Scourges of God.

In these *Croisades* there were always many Bishops, Priests, and Monks; some were put upon by a true Zeal, but Liber-

tinism was a Motive to the greatest part. they thought they might be allowed to bear Arms, and to make use of them against Infidels. 'Tis easy to imagin what decay in Discipline these lawless courses joined with the ignorance which had then for so long a time prevailed in the World must needs have produced. The Popes themselves, even those that were the best meaning among them, found themselves under a necessity of tolerating a great part of these Abuses. They were forced to connive at many particular disorders to further the grand design in general. They were obliged to bare a great regard to the Heads of the Croisades, since by the conduct of their Arms they successfully maintained the Cause of the Christian Religion, though they themselves by their vicious Lives were a Scandal to it. The Indulgence of the Holy-war was also extended to such as should take up Arms against the Hereticks, who rebelled not only against the Church but against their own Princes, as the *Albigenses* in *France*. And in general it was granted in all Wars, where in the Interest of Religion was thought to be concerned: And they judged it hard measure to deny the same favour to Women, or such other Persons whose Age or Condition put them out of a capacity of bearing Arms; and therefore the indulgence

gence was Communicated to them upon their giving Alms toward defraying the expences of the War; nor only so, but Alms also applyed to other pious Works were likewise judged proper to make satisfaction for Sins. They gave either Plenary or limited Indulgences to those who contributed toward the building of Churches: And this supplied the Bishops with the means of erecting those stately Cathedrals so much admired at this Day. The same favour was granted for building and endowing Hospitals, especially those two sorts of them which were very frequent in those Days, *viz.* For *Pilgrims* and *Lepers*. There were also in favour of the Poor, indulgences annexed to other works of Charity. Thus Satisfaction became in a manner Arbitrary. The Penetintial Canons being now no longer kept up in practice, the very knowlege of them was soon after lost; and Penance was now made so gentle a thing, that Confession was the most dreadful part of it.

IN the Thirteenth Century, the Ancient Discipline received this blow. The Authority of Tradition had carryed it down through the Ages foregoing, and it may be said the Church never was so great a sufferer by simple Ignorance, as by new Speculations. They now began in

LIII.  
The great  
number of  
Doctors.



in their Scholastick Disputes to depend too little upon pure Authority and were over fond of working out every thing by their own Reasonings. *Aristotle* grew much in fashion. And the Subtilties of Logick and Metaphysics which they borrowed from the *Arabians*, were in mighty request. The scarcity of Antient Books, and the difficulty of understanding them by reason of the change of Language and Customes, Tempted them so much the more to apply themselves to Speculations and the Reading of the Moderns. Thus the Scholastick Divinity was more valued than the Positive; *Gratian* and the Master of the Sentences were read more than the Fathers; and in the Scriptures, they were more curious in hunting after a Figurative Sense than careful to observe the Literal.

After the Twelvth Age the greatest part of the Bishops applyed themselves but little to Preaching, and the Instruction of their Clergy. They suffered themselves to be encumbered with Temporal affairs. The Laity, and especially the Princes being Bred up in Ignorance, knew not how to Manage without the assistance of the Clergy. 'Twas out of the Bishops and Abbots that they chose their Chancellours and Ministers of State. They were made Judges in almost all

Cau-

Causes. Without going any farther, their Temporal Lordships found them work enough; the Wars in which they were often forced to engage, the fortifying their Garrisons and assembling their Troops. They were obliged to maintain grand Equipages, large Families, and all sort of Officers. In the midst of so much business, the Spiritual part, which ought to have been the chiefest, was too often neglected. Thus Studying, Preaching, and the Administring the Sacraments fell to the Lot of the Doctors, of whom the Universities were full, but chiefly into the Hands of the Religious Mendicants, who came in very seasonably to the Relief of the Church in these unhappy Ages.

But these Religious, how holy and how Zealous soever they might be, were not Proper Pastors over any certain people, nor had they any regular Jurisdiction. They were rather a sort of *Missionaries*; who following the orders of their Superiors, travelled throughout all the Dioceses, Labouring in the Conversion of Hereticks and Sinners. Nor were their Labours without Success. But the good services they did the Church took not their full effect for want of power to continue their farther Instructions to those whom they had converted, to correct their Miscarriages, and compleat their Work, by

abid-

abiding with them and watching over them till they had established them beyond relapse in the Right way. All this they could do only to some particular Persons, who voluntarily Resigned themselves to their Direction. So that the Fruits of their Labours could not be of so general Effect, as when every Bishop closely applyed himself to the Edification of his own Flock.

The Case was much the same with them in respect of Studies. The Doctors whether Seculars or Regulars that were in possession of the Chairs, had scarce any thing of Authority, besides what their personal Merit procured them. It was free for the Students to follow what Profession they liked best. And from hence arose that Diversity of Sects and Opinions, concerning matters that were allowed to be disputed. For as there were a great number of Doctors who were not employed in the Cure of Souls, but spent their whole time in the Schools; they had leisure to treat of many Questions more Curious than useful. The Laicks also were left at their own Liberty to follow what Preachers they most Affected, and to chuse to themselves their own Confessors, besides their proper Pastors. So that among such a multitude of Priests, bad Christians could not fail of meeting with

*Thomas.*  
*discipl. iv.*  
*l. i. c. 69.*  
*n. xi.*

with some or other who would give them Absolution upon very easy Terms: And thus such as were willing to be deceived themselves, or had a mind to Deceive others did not forbear, without mending their Manners, to frequent the Churches and come to the Sacraments.

The greatest part of the Doctors themselves were born down by the Stream of the Corruption of the People, and suffered many considerable Relaxations of Discipline to plead Prescription. The little knowledge they had of the ancient Manners of the Church, was the principal cause of this Mischief. The usages introduced an Age or two before went down with them for immemorial Customs: It is strange, for instance, that in the Days of *St. Thomas Aquinas*, they should not remember how they kept their Fasts in the Age preceeding; For *St. Bernard* assures us that in his time all the World without distinction, observed in Lent not to break their Fast till Evening. Kings and Princes, Clergy, People, gentle and Simple, Rich and Poor, all of them did so; and yet *St. Thomas* not only plainly tells us that in his time none Fasted beyond three of the Clock in the Afternoon, but also pretends to prove, That Christians ought not to Fast after any other manner; and that Fasting till the Evening was peculiar to

*S. Bern.*  
*Serm. in*  
*cap. Jejun.*

*S. Thom. ii.*  
*ix. 147.*  
*art. 7. ad i.*

to the old Law: So easy a thing is it to find arguments to justify all sorts of Practices when one is ignorant of Fact. This Ignorance made them look upon Antiquity as Novelty, and the Authority of the Moderns as a surer Ground to proceed upon than that of the Antients, of whom they had only a confused notion, that their Manners were altogether different from ours, without sufficiently distinguishing whether this diversity lay in any of the Essentials of Christianity, or only in such indifferent matters as Habits and Language. And as they gave themselves the liberty of starting every Day new Questions and inventing new Subtilties; there arose at last a set of Casuists who founded their Morals rather upon human Reason, than upon Scripture and Tradition, as if Jesus Christ had not taught us all Truth, as well for Manners as for Faith; but had left us still to seek with the ancient Philosophers.

LIV.  
A succession of  
found  
Doctrin  
and good  
examples  
in all  
times.

I SHALL not pretend to give a particular of the disorders that followed upon these loose Principles which they brought into their new System of Morality; they are but too well known of themselves: Nor is it my design to describe the manners of bad Christians, which are no better than those of other Men; my business is only to

to represent the manners which distinguish true Christians from the rest of the World. Now God hath never so forsaken his Church, but examples of this kind were always to be found in it: After what manner soever the Church was governed whether immediately by Bishops, or by Priests, either Commissioned by them, or sent abroad by the Popes, whether by Seculars or Regulars, by ordinary Pastors or Foreign Missionaries; it hath always had the same Religion and the same Body of Doctrine. The true Faith has always been preserved in purity, and the grand principles of Morality have always stood firm. It hath been always a thing certain and granted that we ought to observe the Law of God explained according to Tradition, and the Authority of the ancients; and that we ought to form our Lives after the examples of those holy Persons whom the Church hath publicly Honoured for Saints.

And such living Models there have always been; every Age hath had its Apostles that went to Preach the Faith to Infidels; every Age hath had its Martyrs; Virgins and true Penitents have always been in great numbers: It was (as St. Bernard observes) the sincere desire of Penitence that after the Eleventh Age introduced so many new Orders of Monks.

God

*Serm. de S.  
Andr. vir.  
S. Mala.*

God hath always from time to time raised up extraordinary Persons to maintain his holy Doctrine and revive decaying Piety. What is there comparable to *St. Bernard*? Hath he not shewn in his own Person the Zeal of the Prophets, the Learning and Eloquence of the greatest Doctors of the Church, and the Mortification of the most perfect Recluses? We are certainly much indebted to *Innocent* the Third, and the other great and learned Popes of those times, to the *Master* of the Sentences and *St. Thomas* and the rest of them who have reduced Divinity into a Method. *St. Francis* hath given us an eminent Example of the Christian Life, practiced according to the Letter, of an Humility and Mortification worthy of the Apostolick Time: Thus from Age to Age, from Generation to Generation, God hath preserved in his Church the succession of true Doctrine and Holy Life.

*Heb. xiii. 8.*

It is certain then, That Jesus Christ is to Day as well as Yesterday, and will be the same to all Ages. In vain therefore do bad Christians now adays vilify the Veneration we justly have for Antiquity, and for the Examples of the Saints; by supposing that in the First Ages of Christianity Men were clear of another Nature than what we are now; their Bodies robust and better able to bare those Fastings  
and

and other such-like Severities; their Spirits more Docile and pliable, and therefore all the practices of Vertue more easy to them: If we tell them that *St. Peter* and *St. Paul* lived in Poverty and Labour; *V. Chrysost*  
they Answer, *They were Apostles*; *St. An-*  
*thony* and *St. Martin* underwent great *de com-*  
Mortifications; *They were Saints*: *St.*  
*Austin* made his Clergy live in Common; and he himself (tho' a great Bishop) lived but very Ordinarily; *This might be in*  
*those Days*: Do you think therefore that these Words, *Saintship*, *Antiquity*, and the *Primitive Church*, are allowable exceptions? That the exercises of Penance; the being continually occupied in the word of God; the renouncing the Pleasures and Vanities of this wicked World; the Clergies keeping themselves disengaged from Secular Affairs, and leading lives singularly Exemplary: That all these things were the extraordinary attainments of the Primitive Church, whose excellencies we must not pretend to Rival: That to exempt our selves from the obligation of following so glorious Presidents, 'tis but to distinguish the Times and the Work's done.

The Church (say they) was strong and vigorous in her Youth, and produced then Heroick Vertues: She is now in her Old Age and Declension; she hath had  
Z her

her *Spring* and her *Summer*; and now she is in her *Winter*: But what mean these *Metaphors*? Do they pretend that the duration of the Church doth in reality resemble the Changes of the Year, or the course of the Life of Man? will any one dare to say, that she was imperfect in her beginnings, wanted time to give her full Maturity, and must feel her decays; as other transitory things, or like the Productions of Men. But I desire to know in what this change has happened since the Publication of the Gospel; *Is it in humane Nature?* Experience and the Faith of all History assures us the contrary: *Is it in the Law of God, or is it in his Grace?* Herein there is still the same Power, the same Goodness that ever there was. Jesus Christ hath never told us that his Church must be governed by different Rules according to the changes of Times. The Abolition of the ancient Law and the Abrogation of Ceremonies was expressly foretold: but as to the Gospel it must be Preached both to the utmost parts of the Earth, and to the end of the World: Let us not therefore deceive our selves with frivolous excuses, nor charge the present corruption of our Manners upon any other fault than that of our Ignorance and Negligence. *It is as dangerous* (saith Pope Gregory the Seventh) *to undermine the*  
Man

Apolog.  
decretor.

*Manners and Discipline of the ancient Church as to attack its Faith, since both the one and the other are derived to us from the same Tradition.*

IT is true, the Church hath sometimes born with some Abuses which had taken too deep rooting, waiting a favourable Conjunction to Reform them; and hath sometimes indulged her Children for the hardness of their Hearts in the Relaxation of the ancient Discipline. The Rule of Communicating four times a Year stood in force in the Ninth Age; but in the following it was only ill observed. *Petrus Blesensis* informs us, that in his times in the Twelfth Age, the greatest part of Christians Communicated but once a Year: The Church complied with this usage and put it in the Canons of the *Lateran Council*. It was forbidden formerly to say the private Masses during the time of solemn Mass, to avoid disturbing that Service; yet Custom carried it. In the time of *St. Thomas*; that is about Four hundred Years ago, they kept their Fasts till three of the Clock in the Afternoon; and we find no mention but of one eating; afterwards it came to Noon, and a Collation was allowed: Amongst these Mitigations I reckon Penance left to the discretion of the Confessor, and the frequent granting of Indulgencies; as likewise the dispensing

LV.  
Some abuses tolerated in the Church and how they came to be so.  
Petr. Bles. Sermon. 16.  
Can. omn. atriusque, 1215.  
Conc. Rav. iv. 1317. rubr. 12.  
ii. ii. 9. 147. a. vii.

Z 2

with

with the Rigor of many of the Rules of the Monasticks. They thought that the Religious, though falling short of the utmost Perfection that their Rule required, would yet even under some abatements arrive to an higher Perfection than if they continued in the World, and that it was better somewhat to soften and qualify the Fast of Lent, than to let it run wholly into disuse; but we are not from those Condescensions to imagine that the way to Heaven is become more easy to Us, than it was to them of Old; that we are more happy than our Fore-fathers; or that the Bishops and Popes of these last Ages thought themselves wiser than their Predecessors.

We need only read the Constitutions and Canons which have Authorised the several Relaxations, to see that the Church never did it without Regret. Many Deviations came in only by common usage. In the mean time the Church hath taken special care in such cases, to retain certain Observances in remembrance of the true Practice of Antiquity. Thus the Office for the Noon or Evening Service said on Fast-days before Dinner; All the Formularies of Ordinations and other publick Acts, are as it were so many repeated Protestations to salve the authority

ty of the ancient Rules, and bar the pretence of Prescription against them.

There are other Abuses which the Church hath always condemned; as those absurd Shows which they had the boldness to bring even into the Churches themselves, and which were forbidden in the Council of *Basil*: And as the profane Jollity on the Feasts of the Saints, the remains of which wee see in that of *St. Martin's Day*, of the Kings, and on those of their Patron Saints in the Villages; or Country Wakes: And as the Debauches of the Carnival, which had no other beginning than the Reluctance People had about the keeping of Lent, resolving to take their Fill of Pleasure before they began their Fast. Little did the Apostles and their Disciples imagine that this Holy Preparation for the Passover, should one Day have proved an occasion of Dissolution and Licentiousness.

The Saints and all true Christians have always openly declared against these Abuses. We know with what Vigour *St. Charles Borromeus* suppressed them, and how Zealously he Laboured to bring back again into the Church the Spirit of Antiquity, even to the lesser matters of Religion. The Council of Trent, and those who were employed to see it put into Execution in the Provinces, aimed

*Conc. Basil.  
Sess. xii. c.  
xi. V. Syn.  
Vigorn. an.  
1240. c. iv.*



Vi. S. Teresa  
c. 27. fin.

at no other end than This. And so many Reformations that have been made in the Religious Orders since the last Age, were only in order to reduce them to their Primitive Constitution. St. *Teresa* could not endure that under the pretence of Discretion, and for the avoiding of Scandal, there should be Restraints lay'd upon the fervour of those who affected to imitate the Saints of the first Age. She complains that these Discretions have spoiled the World, and maintains that in her Age, which is very near ours, the Vertues of the Primitive Church were not Impracticable Lessons. 'Twas upon this occasion she wrote the Life of St. *Peter of Alcantara*, she herself being an eye Witness to it.

LVI.  
The use of  
this Work.

Proceeding upon so good Authorities, I thought I might do some service to the World in Representing the Manners of the Ancients, which ought to be the Patterns now of all good Christians. I have said nothing but what is well known to Persons of Learning, and taken out of Books with which they are familiarly acquainted. And they will see that much more might have been added to the same Purpose. There are many things here not commonly known to every good Christian; and such things too as are fit for their Edification. They will see that the

the Religion of a Christian consists not altogether (as too many imagine) in some formal performances. To say over every Morning and Night some short Prayers; to assist on Sundays at the Publick Service; to distinguish the Holy Time of Lent, only by abstaining from some certain sort of Dyets, and to dispence with it upon trivial Occasions; to approach the Sacraments so Seldom, and with so small affection, that they turn Solemn Festivals into Melancholy Days. And as to the common Course of their Lives, to be as much addicted to the Interests and Pleasures of this World as *Pagans* themselves could be. These are not the Christians I have been Describing.

I hope also, that the Description I have here given of the Holy Manners of those that were really Christians, may make some Impressions upon such Persons who have no more sense of things, than to confound the true Religion with those false ones which the Error of Ignorant, or Craft of disingenuous Men have introduced. Let a Man but consider that vast change of Manners which the Gospel hath wrought in all Nations, and the Distinguishing Characters there have always been between true Christians, and Infidels; and he will see that the Christian Religion stands upon a surer Bottom than he

thought for. He will be forced to believe that it was at first established by the Power of Miracles, for there can be nothing more Incredible than that such a Change should be wrought without Miracles. These Miracles made so strong an Impression, that it was not till very late any one did so much as think of calling them into Question. To speak no more than what we know, 'tis scarce above Two hundred Years since this Libertinism was introduced by some *Italians*, who tho' Men of Wit, were very Ignorant of Religion, and disgusted with these Abuses; then they were charmed with the Beauty of the Ancient Greek and Latin Authors, with the Government of these People and their way of Living: And so much the more because the maxims of those Heathens better agreed with the Corruption of human Nature, and the general Practices of Mankind. In short these Modern *Italians* relished nothing else.

This mischief was farther encreased by the new Heresies that were broached in these last Ages. The Disputes upon the very Fundamental Principles of Religion shock't the Faith of many; who yet upon divers Temporal Motives continued in the outward profession of the Catholick Religion: And amongst the Hereticks themselves were great numbers who being no lon-

longer restrained by Authority, have driven the Consequences of their ill principles to extremity, and are come to that pass as to look upon Religion it self as no more than a piece of State-Policy. This unhappy notion got ground, and easily spread it self. Young Persons hearing their Parents perhaps, or those whom they looked upon as Men of Wit, making some lewd Jest upon Religion, or it may be venturing to say in plain terms, that there was nothing in it at the bottom, presently took up with that; and finding these notions agreeable to their Passions and Desires, never troubled their thoughts any farther about inquiring into the Merit of the matter. Vanity also came in for its share: They thought by this means to distinguish themselves from the ignorant Vulgar, and appear more discerning than the honest well meaning People of former Ages: besides sloth was another Motive to make them either take matters upon trust, or determine at all Adventures rather than to be at the trouble of examining the Truth; but let Men say what they will, the matters I have here laid down will be always true; what *Origen* in his Book against *Celsus* so often inculcates, that Jesus Christ hath reformed the World, and filled it with vertues unknown to former Ages.

And

LVII.  
The Con-  
clusion.

*The Man-  
ners of the  
Israelites,  
published  
also in Eng-  
lish 1683.  
but with-  
out taking  
any notice  
of the Au-  
thor.*

And this is what I had to say concern-  
ing the Manners of the Israelites and of  
the Christians; such was the outward  
appearance of the Lives of the faithful of  
the Old and of the New-Testament. In  
my Opinion the first Discourse shews us  
the best use of Temporal advantages, and  
the most accountable Methods of living  
up to Innocence and Nature. In this  
*latter* I have endeavoured to shew what  
was the life of those whose Conversation  
was in Heaven; and who while they were  
in the Flesh lived yet by the Spirit. This  
Life perfectly Spiritual and Supernatural  
was the peculiar effect of the Grace of Je-  
sus Christ.

If what I have Written proves Instru-  
mental to give a right notion of the Life  
which is truly reasonable and Christian,  
and to make any one apply himself se-  
riously to the practice of it: If matters  
prove thus, I shall not at all be disturbed  
at the different Censures of the Reader,  
or the Faults with which the Work may  
be Charged.



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A  
**T A B L E**  
OF THE  
**H E A D S.**

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